

# Heart of the Gospel and Revelation



by Father Francis Patrick Donnelly, SJ



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## **Preface to "Heart of the Gospel"**

The chapters in this book had their origin in a desire to find out the meaning and use of the word "heart" in the New Testament and to apply that revealed teaching to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The various texts were studied with the help of approved commentators, and their meaning accurately determined, as far as was necessary for the purpose in view. No new interpretations were ventured upon and, in some cases, interpretations which might be looked upon as less probable were accepted, when it was thought they could better further the religious and devotional scope of the articles. The study in many instances showed that the word "heart" in the Gospels serves to illustrate the traits of our Lord's Heart by contrast more than by likeness. May the truths here collected from the Word of God and the teaching of His Church increase in the hearts of the faithful the knowledge and love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus!

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# Devotion to the Sacred Heart

*You are My friends, if you do the things I command you.*

Devotion is not to be identified with devotional practices any more than patriotism is with fireworks. A man may spend the great holidays quietly in his home, may saw wood on Washington's Birthday, and read a book on the Fourth of July, but if he observes the laws of his country and practises the ten commandments, he will be a true patriot and need not worry because he has not shouted himself hoarse hurrahing for the blessings of freedom or burnt his fingers setting off firecrackers, or even tired the muscles of his arm waving the Stars and Stripes. All of these actions are laudable and have their good effects. They are manifestations of patriotism, although not the highest manifestations, and they are means in some cases necessary means to enkindle and foster true patriotism. Devotional practices are indeed much more necessary to devotion than all the usual means of displaying and stimulating patriotism are for the proper development of that virtue, yet a devotion may exist and be intense without having any particular and exceptional ways of manifesting itself. The hymns, the lights, the pictures, the beautiful shrines, the special services on certain days, these and many other excellent practices are required to arouse and keep alive true devotion. Without all that, there may often be reason to suspect the absence of devotion or to be skeptical of its intensity. By such displays, too, true devotion is exercised



and developed, not wasting itself by use, but growing stronger, like a muscle, with exercise. Devotional practices, then, are helpful and even necessary, but they do not constitute devotion. Light and air are helpful and necessary for life, but they are from without and life is from within, and devotion, too, is from within.

We sometimes hear good men say: "This business of devotion is not for me. I am not much for feeling or sentiment." What should be said in answer? These good people should be politely but firmly assured that they do not know what devotion is. If devotion is not the same as devotional practices, neither is it the same as sentiment and feeling. True devotion is not feeling; it is willing. It is conviction, not sentiment. Feeling and sentiment are not always within our complete power. They may vary with the weather or with the pulse. Devotion does not watch the thermometer or fluctuate with the barometer. It does not disappear with our appetite and return after a good meal. Devotion belongs to the will and has its source in solid convictions. Give a man a firm unyielding grasp of a truth; follow that up with a relentless determination to abide by that truth, and you have equipped a man with a full-fledged devotion.

Every year many of our gallant firemen meet the death of heroes. Do they wait, when the alarm comes, for a gush of sweet feeling or the spur of sentiment to rouse them from sleep and put them in motion? They have no time to wait for such superfluities. As they rush to their post, hastily tightening their belts, one idea is uppermost in their minds: There is a fire somewhere and our place is at it to put it out. That is their conviction; that is their willing. Next morning, perhaps, they may feel the warmth of feeling and sentiment, if they can find in the papers, as often they will not, the scanty recognition of their bravery. Have they devotion? The

noble deaths of so many are a testimony beyond the power of words to show that men, who may not know how to define devotion or call it by its right name, know well how to practise it in its highest and most unselfish form.

Yet, if devotion is not perfect or perfected without some devotional practices, so we may not deny the splendid influence of true feeling and right sentiment upon devotion. The man who would banish sentiment and feeling from the hearts of the world is an active worker for the return of the glacial period of very hard rock and very cold ice. Who would eclipse the dawning hopes of youth or draw the curtain of twilight over the sunset memories of old age? Must all the canvas, on which are painted the pictures of the world, be made into flour-sacks, and all our monuments broken up to macadamize our roads? The eloquent vendor of food tablets may prove by facts and figures, by analytical tables and accurate weights, that his vest-pocket breakfast has all the nutriment of a table d'hote dinner, but the world will not be won away from its varied and substantial meal to any tasteless, odorless, colorless, sizeless substitute for a bill of fare. If man were a machine, then sentiment would be as useful as a bouquet on a locomotive. If we were all angels, and had minds not continually swayed by conflicting currents of the body, or forever unsettled by brilliant pictures of the imagination, then a truth would mean a resolution, and a resolution an act, and we should leap without a pause from duty to devotion; but unhappily we are not yet bodiless angels. We throb with feeling, we glow with sentiment. Devotion is indeed conviction and willing, but true feeling and right sentiment must grace the path of duty, making conviction easier and willing prompter. Devotion will never produce its fullest and richest harvests unless feeling soften the soul and sentiment keep it ever warm. It is the purpose of many devotional practices, of pictures and songs and meetings, to awaken these



emotions, stir up the being to some of its untouched depths, and so elicit the full cooperation of soul and body in realizing all the results of devotion.

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In discussing devotion to the Sacred Heart there is especial need of remembering what devotion really is and how it may exist without great feeling or many devotional practices. The devotions of the Church have all enriched her emotional language, but none perhaps more so than devotion to the Sacred Heart. The most sacred words on man's tongue, words throbbing with the tenderest feelings, are frequent in this devotion, and one who would forget that devotion was of the will might feel that such language was a foreign one to him and one he could never master or speak with ease. Devotion to the Sacred Heart has also grown and developed, manifesting itself in a variety of ways, and, if devotional practices constituted devotion, the bravest would perhaps be appalled and discouraged when they saw how impossible it would be for them to take up a small part of the countless practices that the friends of our Lord's Heart have invented and spread abroad to do Him honor. It is consoling, however, to remember that we can be truly and profoundly devoted to the Heart of Christ without these many means that help others. We need not sing, or need not be able to sing, all the hymns or say all the prayers or attend all the meetings or join in the services that have multiplied and will multiply around this devotion. We shall have as much of that as we like and as will help us, but to have devotion to the Sacred Heart, we must have, first, our conviction, and then our determination.

The fireman goes to a fire wherever it may be and whenever it may be because it is his conviction that his place of business is there, and he is determined to be at his place of

business if there is anything to be done. What is the conviction of a man devoted to the Heart of Christ? Devotion to the Sacred Heart is devotion to the love of Christ. It comes from a profound conviction that Christ is our true friend, that at first He was God without a human nature, that afterwards He became man, that He became Christ, all for us and to show His friendship for us. "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son." Christ our Lord was born of friendship for us, had no other reason for every breath of life He drew except friendship for us, and hesitated not to give the supreme test of the most loving friendship by going to His death for us. Admit that truth: "Christ is my friend"; don't merely say it to yourself but realize it; possess it and let it possess you, and you have the beginning and seed of devotion to the Heart of Christ. Now, follow up that conviction with a determination that you will recognize the fact of Christ's friendship in your life, that you will be His friend as He has been yours, and you have the full-grown devotion to the Sacred Heart. You may not dance with joy under the circumstances, though it would be an excellent thing if you could; you may not be thrilled through with the grandeur, the divinity of that conviction, though perhaps some day you may; but if the conviction is there, and the determination is there, you need not be alarmed at the absence of the feeling; your devotion is true devotion. The fireman says: "My conviction is that I should be at the fire; my determination is to get there as soon as possible." He is devoted to his duty. Let any man say: "My conviction is that Christ was and is my friend; my determination is to show myself His friend," and he is devoted to the Heart of Christ and will be ready with the brave fireman to make sacrifices, and heroic ones, if his duty calls for them.

It may be objected here that there is, then, no difference between being a good Catholic and being devoted to the Heart of Christ. There need not be any difference at all in



what is done, but there is a great difference in the motive for which it is done. To go to Mass on Sunday, to go to Confession and Communion, to observe the laws of God and His Church for no other reason but because you are afraid of hell, is to be devoted principally to your eternal comfort; to perform those very same actions because you wish to acknowledge and testify your friendship for Christ, your friend, is to be devoted to the Heart of Christ. The motives for which we do an action are under the control of our free will and we are responsible for them. Of course, good motives will not make a bad act good, but they will ennoble any act that is not bad and intensify one that is good. The cup of water that is given in kindness deserves our gratitude; the cup of water that is given in the name of Christ will receive the reward of Christ because it is an act, if we so wish it, of loving friendship for Him. A man dies for his wealth and he is a brave man; he dies for his country and he is a hero and a patriot; he dies for his religion and he is a martyr. Christ died for me and He is my friend and my God. The death is the same; the motive is different and makes a profound difference in the result. You may be a good Catholic for many good and laudable motives, and if you are a good Catholic because you wish to testify in some small way your love of Christ, then you are devoted to the Sacred Heart.

But why, it may be asked, do we speak of devotion to the Sacred Heart instead of devotion to Christ? The question may be answered by another. Why have nations flags; why have causes their rallying cries, and colleges their colors and cheers? Why do we speak of the War of the Roses; why of the thistle of Scotland and the shamrock of Ireland? Why, but because we want a brief, telling way of summing up and expressing what we hold most dear? A word will do service for a thought, will hold it and keep it for centuries still fresh and green. So a symbol will express a whole cause, will

explain it, will enshrine it forever. Symbols many and various have been seen among men, but where has there been one more touching, more significant than the one used in this devotion? Christ himself, we fondly believe, chose this symbol of His Heart as His standard, a symbol that is the complete and tenderest expression of all we mean and practise in this devotion. The Heart of Christ is the symbol, the representation, the expressive picture of the love of Christ. Every language has made the heart a synonym for love, and the Heart of Christ, as the standard of this devotion, means and signifies Christ's love, and bears in all its details the strongest and most lasting proofs of that love.

It should be noted that there are different kinds of symbols. The flag is an artificial symbol for country: the heart is a natural symbol of love. There is no connection between cloth of certain shapes and colors and a government, except by a common agreement of the citizens. But between the heart and love, there is a connection established by nature, beyond and above all convention of man. The highest, the noblest love is not rooted in flesh and blood; it is of the soul and spiritual. The love of art, the love of country, the love of religion, like the love of one's mother and father, move in regions above the excitement of passion. Yet, as man is made up of soul and body, even his most spiritual aspirations are registered in their effects upon the less noble part of him. The purest love of God which filled the soul of a Saint Stanislaus caught up into its flame his innocent blood, and his heart beat with a fever-heat of fervor. The fact, then, of the natural connection between love and the heart is a matter of easily verified experience, even though the exact nature of the connection be not understood or even investigated, and so there is sufficient reason to make the heart a natural symbol of love.

The full symbol of devotion to the Sacred Heart contains elements not put there by nature, elements revealing the supreme love of Christ and persuading His followers to new and more tender expressions of their affection. The full symbol is not the Heart of Christ as it came from the hands of God, unwounded, uncrowned, in the vigor of life, in the perfection of Its being. The Heart, that is the royal standard of this devotion, is pierced with a spear, clasped with a crown of thorns, and forever supporting the weight of a Cross; It is a crucified Heart, the Heart not simply of a friend, but more, of a wounded friend. The full realization of this symbol will make clear another touching feature, that is found and should be found in true devotion to the Sacred Heart. That feature is reparation. Reparation is the Good Samaritan for Christ's Heart. It pours the oil and wine of an intense love and devotion into the wounds which others have made by neglect or offence. Gratitude is the birth of love; reparation is its full and perfect growth. Gratitude is turning from self; reparation is forgetfulness of self. Gratitude is gladness that a friend has shown his love for us; reparation is sadness that a friend has received harm from others. Reparation, then, naturally follows upon true devotion to the Sacred Heart. Reparation is love's noblest and most perfect revenge. Base revenge attacks the offender, visiting punishment upon him for his offences; reparation, with the revenge of love, flies to the one offended, and lavishes upon him fuller, warmer love, because others have been cold and cruel. When the mother dies, the father strives to be mother and father to his little ones. He is trying to make up for and repair the sad loss of death. Reparation strives to supply to Christ for every other friendship denied Him. The crucified Heart of Christ is, therefore, the complete symbol of this devotion. Whether the devotion inspires new deeds or vivifies with new meaning the customary actions of a man's life, it will put a purpose into them that was not there before. His heart will



go out to his friend, his benefactor, his crucified Saviour; it will flame with the motives of gratitude, love and reparation. His life will be lived, influenced by such consoling convictions. He will be practising true devotion to the Sacred Heart.

On the battlefields of old, just where the enemy turned to flight and defeat, the victorious general built of the spoils of war and the weapons of the conquered, an enduring memorial which in days gone by was called a trophy. Our leader, our greatest conqueror, has reared a trophy. The enemy had advanced, apparently victorious, until his spear was thrust into the very Heart of our Captain, but there, where the enemy's victory seemed complete, his overthrow was accomplished. The tide of victory swept at that point to its highest and bloodiest surge, but then ebbed forever. From the weapons of His enemy, from cross and crown and opened Heart, our conquering leader fashioned a trophy which was the best testimony of His love and the most abiding memorial and standard of the cause to which we give ourselves in Devotion to the Sacred Heart.

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One more question, and everything on this point will, we think, be clear. What has the Apostleship of Prayer, then, to do with Devotion to the Sacred Heart? "It is in league with the Sacred Heart," is the full answer. They are allied forces in the same cause, partners in the same work, engaged in the same important business, fighting for the same great end. If, indeed, there can be an alliance or partnership where one of the two parties concerned does almost every thing and the other almost nothing. Yet little as the Apostleship of Prayer does in the great work of saving souls, that little must be done. Christ's grace does everything, but it does it, so Christ willed, through Sacraments and prayer. By prayer it is that

we league ourselves with the Sacred Heart for the salvation of souls.

Again, the Apostleship of Prayer is in league with the Sacred Heart because devotion to that Heart is the great means by which it carries on its campaigns. From that devotion it draws its weapons and the strength to wield them; by that devotion it unites its forces and wins its victories. That devotion, too, it propagates with all its power and keeps alive by its essential practices. The motive, we said, makes the devotion. "For Christ, my wounded friend" is the motive of devotion to Christ's Heart. But how do we put that motive into our life? By willing it. And when do we will it? When we think of it; and we must often think of it and will it, if the flame of our devotions is not to fail. It is just here that the Apostleship of Prayer comes in with its Morning Offering, and makes us say every morning of our lives: "This day and all that is in it for the Heart of Christ, for Christ, my crucified friend." The Morning Offering is the daily birth of conviction and determination; it is the new making of the fire of devotion; it is the tightening of the belt as we go where duty calls us. In the Morning Offering we catch sight, "by the dawn's early light," of our glorious standard, our unexampled trophy, and plunge once more into the fray.

Finally, the Apostleship of Prayer in its divine ambition to enlist all souls in a union of prayer for the salvation of men, is trying to infuse into every soul the purpose that was in Christ's Heart, to warm every heart with Its warmth, and color every heart with Its color; to make of mankind, we may be so bold as to say, one great, throbbing heart, another Heart of Christ, doing by the count less acts of prayer what He did by His countless drops of blood, building up the Kingdom of God with the redeemed. All the rays of sunlight that fall every day upon the great globe of the earth are but a few rills of light from the fathomless ocean of the sun. The

banded millions of the League are far from what they would like to be; they are a shadow to their Model's substance; their limited love compared to His is like the slight lift of the tide far up some inland river when compared with the mighty wave that rises in the central seas; yet if all hearts upon earth respond even faintly and far off to the pulsings of Christ's tide of love, they will be what the Apostleship of Prayer wants them to be they will form a throbbing, loving, world-wide Heart of Christ.



# The Heart of Prayer

*Pondering them in her heart.*

"Putting two and two together" is a simple expression for a sublime and fruitful work. Man and man alone can put two and two together. In that operation man is severed from the beasts by a chasm which only God's omnipotence can bridge, because to put two and two together is the operation of a spiritual soul. By the same operation man gains experience, science and wisdom. Now it is that same simple, yet sublime work that goes on in the heart of prayer; the same which went on in its perfect form in the most perfect heart of prayer among men. Saint Luke, describing the events of our Lord's birth and recounting the story told by the shepherds of the Angels apparition, says that "Mary kept all these words pondering them in her heart." "Pondering them in her heart" means, in the Latin and the Greek, what we may describe by the homely phrase, putting two and two together.

What must a man do to put two and two together? He must understand clearly; he must deliberate; he must affirm or deny that the single twos belong together; he must draw a conclusion. By reflecting then on what he has done, he may draw far-reaching principles, and, associating other similar conclusions, he may draw other principles. Principles then are put together and order arises; and from order, system and science and then wisdom. Such are the fruits of "pondering" over the treasures of the heart, fruits that Mary gathered in their fullness and richest ripeness. Take a similar but a far inferior case. Saint Ignatius of Loyola spent nine months in the cave of Manresa pondering over the truths of God, weighing them, ordering them, and combining them.

The results of that season of prayer we still have in the consummate science and wisdom of the Spiritual Exercises. Oh, if we only had the wisdom that grew and filled Mary's heart, .from the pondering of her whole life, from her Immaculate Conception to her Annunciation, from the Annunciation to the Ascension, from the Ascension to the Assumption! The volume of that prayerful heart would contain all the revealed truth, which Saint John declared all the books of the world could not hold, and it would contain much more, as the treasures of Mary's heart were more numerous and more precious and more perfectly pondered than the riches of Saint John. Saint Thomas of Aquin put all theology into an epitome, called the Summa. Mary's heart of prayer was the epitome of all God's dealings with man - is it too daring to say? - God's Summa.

How then shall we describe Mary's heart of prayer when it took to pondering upon the Heart of Christ? Jesus was her all, her universe, and His Heart was that universe's central sun, not surely separated in her loving and prayerful pondering from the effulgence of the Divinity which invested that Heart and which divinized the mother's perfect affection, transforming supreme love into supreme worship. Saint John heard once the beating of that Heart. He straightway became the "one whom Jesus loved," and his thoughts soared to distant heights and circled to far-off horizons, cognizant of visions hitherto beyond mortal ken. If nearness to the Heart of Christ was at least a partial cause of Saint John's ecstasies (and who can doubt it?), then what shall we say of the pondering of her whose heart-beat was once His heart-beat, who long enjoyed a mother's privilege and blessing, whose sensitive ear caught every echo, even the faintest, of joy or sorrow that sounded in her Son's Heart, and whose motherly love realized those emotions more fully, more deeply than any other could possibly do, "pondering them in her heart"?

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Christ, it is true, was known in prophecy, but it was Mary's heart that was the first to know Him in realization. There was nothing on Mary's side to dim or tarnish that knowledge. What was offered was received, undiminished and unblemished. When the Heart of Christ, therefore, in Its turn would take to pondering, where would It turn, prompted by every noble impulse, more surely than to the heart of Mary? If a mirror is perfect, it gives back the image perfectly. No flaws or blurs on its polished surface impair the reflection. In fact, a perfect mirror is not seen at all; it is lost in its reflection. Such, no doubt, was the reflection of Christ in Mary's heart. There was no self there, no blurring, no impairing of the knowledge and love of her Son as they radiated from her heart. Christ, then, would see in her, one responding perfectly to His grace, and, pondering on that fact, there would be an answering reflection from His Heart. Then would arise the exquisite rivalry of loving hearts. Imagine, if you can, where it would end in the case of Jesus and Mary. Put two polished mirrors face to face and a lighted candle between them. Your eye will be bewildered with the multiplied views of the tiny flame, stretching away in the distance. The rays of light leap from surface to surface, giving rise to an endless succession of images. Perhaps that picture will help you to realize the depths and deepenings of love as Jesus and Mary pondered in their hearts upon one another with ever new interchanges and reproductions of the light of love.

If Mary's heart gathered up in its loving meditations an epitome of Christian truths, Jesus, with His pondering Heart, could find in Mary's heart the epitome of His life and mission, of His Incarnation. He could watch every drop of His Heart-blood finding response in Mary. When sin would have seized upon Mary's soul at its creation, His blood was there



to interpose between the destined victim and its inherited doom, and Mary's soul came into existence immaculate. In her this greatest mystery of Christ's grace as well as all other mysteries received their exemplification. About her He saw the Holy Trinity concerned in the Annunciation. Upon her consent His own Incarnation was made to depend. No, Christ would not have to look beyond Mary and Mary's heart to find a picture in miniature of the wondrous dealings of God with man.

We know, however, that the Heart of Christ in Its hours of prayer thought of other hearts too. Sinful hearts as well as Mary's sinless heart came within the scope of His pondering. Well for us that they did so! We need the prayers of that Divine Heart. "In the days of His flesh with a strong cry and tears offering up prayers and supplications to Him that was able to save Him from death, He was heard for His reverence." The burden of our sins drew the strong cry from His lips and wrung the tears from His eyes, but He was heard, as He is heard now too. His priesthood is everlasting. "Whereby He is able also to save forever them that come to God by Him; always living to make intercession for us." The unbelief of Thomas was the occasion of showing us that Christ did not permit His wounds to be closed. They are still open, and the most eloquent intercession comes from the wound of the Heart. Nor is that silent prayer the only one now offered for us in Heaven. The Heart of Christ still ponders on our sins and Mary's sinlessness, and still prays to God for us and is still heard for His reverence.

# The Meek Heart

*Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.*

The one who first said that "meekness is not weakness" was the author of much more than a good rhyme. Meekness is a virtue, and for that reason it is an exhibition of strength. No one would consider trained muscles, graceful, vigorous and untiring, evidence of passiveness or weakness of body. The athlete is our ideal of a strong man. Now, virtues are the trained muscles of the will by the help of which man exercises his freedom energetically, perseveringly, at the proper time and in the proper way. Meekness, then, is strength, if to throttle a lion is strength, if to hold one's place on the fighting line is strength.

All virtues keep to the golden mean; they travel in the middle of the road; they swerve not to the side of excess, nor slip to the side of defect. Meekness has a hard road to travel. It holds the curb upon anger, keeping it to the path. The touchiness of resentment, the tenacity of revenge, the cry of rage becoming a curse, the fierceness of wrath that vents itself in abuse or blows, these meekness must rule and govern in their incessant manifestations along the way of life. In this work meekness should have occasions enough to display its strength, and yet it has another task, not so laborious, not so frequent, but often necessary. There are times when just indignation is called for, when the voice must be raised in protest and when energetic resistance becomes a duty. Meekness then must put spurs to the laggard soul, that it may not weaken or fail in life's journey. So there is the hard task of meekness, to keep the currents of our irascible nature at the proper temperature, not permitting them to be chilled into inactivity or to boil over

into fiery vaporings, but retaining them in sparkling, refreshing vigor anywhere between freezing and boiling point. Or (to put it another way) meekness performs the duties of a good policeman towards our inclinations to anger. It will not allow them to loiter when they should move on or to break the law in any way, as rarely listless anger is more prone to do.

Have you ever considered why our Lord said: "Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart"? Some have thought that He wished to teach us those two virtues of meekness and humility in this passage. Such an interpretation neglects the rest of the passage where those words occur. Christ was opening a school in opposition to that of the Pharisees. He invited all to come to it. "Learn of Me." Never had any school a more attractive advertisement. The teacher was "meek and humble of heart"; the pupils would find rest for their souls; the lesson was sweet and easy. Christ, then, in calling Himself meek of heart was not inviting us to learn that lesson alone. He had many an other lesson to teach us. Rather was He describing the teacher to us and showing His qualifications for the position.

No doubt the first lesson the pupils would learn would be that of meekness, which displayed itself in every word and motion of their friend and teacher, especially as the Pharisees who conducted the rival school had not the meekness of Christ. They were serpents and the brood of vipers, always lying in wait, always stinging to death. They were relentless tyrants in little things, with microscopic eyes and souls, seeing and counting anise and cummin, and choking at a gnat. They clung to the letter of their rules and never looked to the spirit of them. They might wear for a time the mask of meekness, but spying, revenge, treacherous questions, reviling, persecution, death, these were the usual accompaniments of the course of studies in

the school of the Pharisees. The pupils of Christ might shudder at the words, yoke and burden, if they forgot how their meek teacher would fit yoke and burden sweetly to their shoulders and necks, and how by His hands He would make them light. Yokes are made for two, and the other one, they would recall, is Christ.

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Meekness is properly of the heart; it is the safety valve of anger; it keeps the hot blood of the heart at a normal temperature. Anger, according to Saint Thomas, has six daughters. The smallness of the family may excite some surprise, but the great theologian in his usual way shows why they are six and where they keep themselves. Two reside in the heart wrath and revenge. Three live on the angry lips the scream which is a confused cry, the abuse which attacks the neighbor, and blasphemy, which execrates God. The last of these unlovely daughters is blows, the latest-born of the children of anger. Meekness has to manage this unruly household, and does it by keeping the heart under its strong sway.

To call the roll of anger's brood will help us to appreciate better the meekness of Christ's Heart. On rare occasions we know that meekness fired His Heart with zeal, put a lash in His hand, and kindled just indignation upon His lips. But, more frequently, the meekness of Christ is displayed in patience, and gentleness. There could not be in Christ the sinful strife of passions, but there could be the holy rivalry of virtues. Christ had real feelings and real passions, though not sinful ones. How many times meekness and just indignation struggled for the control of Christ's Heart, and how rarely did the victory go to the latter! Saint Mark pictures that struggle for us on one occasion where Christ knew that the Pharisees had determined upon His ruin, and

where He forced them by their silence to admit His right to heal upon the Sabbath. "Looking round about them," relates Saint Mark, "with anger, being grieved for the blindness of their hearts, He saith to the man: Stretch forth thy hand." That was one occasion out of a multitude where meekness allowed not anger to flame into rebuke, but melted anger into grief.

The Passion shows us meekness winning its greatest triumph in the Heart of Christ. Justice might have summoned legions of Angels, but meekness said to Peter: "Put up thy sword." That is the constant cry of meekness: "Put up thy sword." The silence of Christ in His Passion is another manifestation of His meekness. "When He was reviled, He did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not." Nor was the silence of Christ the outcome of a want of feeling. He felt every pain, every insult in its full strength. He felt the waves of just anger beating and raging ever, but ever stayed by the unyielding firmness of meekness.

Even in His innermost thoughts during the Passion we may behold His meekness. The frightfulness of the torments to come, the dark deluge of sin, the lavish generosity of His Redemption and its futility in many cases, these were so many motives why His will should complain and rebel, but meekness preferred the shame and won another triumph at the expense of Christ's Heart-blood. "Not My will but Thine be done," said meekness, with bloody lips. From that dearly bought victory until the end, meekness was king in the Heart of Christ, and around the throne stood all the fair children of that virtue, as beautiful as the daughters of anger are ugly. There were there silence under lash and cross, the look of longing for the denier, the kiss of peace for the traitor, the prayer of forgiveness for all, the hands fettered forever in the widest embrace of love, the Heart shedding its treasures by every avenue upon the world,



giving blood for blows, giving life for death. Teach me,  
Christ, because Thou art meek of heart!

# The Humble Heart

*Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.*

All the virtues practise humility. They recognize deficiencies and defects. They bow in submission to the law. You have seen soldiers stand at attention on the firing-line and face towards the enemy. If there was no submission to one higher up, if there was no enemy to face, the army would disintegrate into the scattered aimlessness of a picnic. Humility is the discipline of the army of virtues, keeping them ever at attention, ever facing the foe, ever ready for the command, "Forward." When Christ our Lord opened His school and issued His prospectus, He promised His pupils perpetual meekness on the part of the Teacher. That single qualification would insure a full school, if the applicants were only certain of the meekness outlasting the opening day or the first class. Christ foresaw the misgivings of the candidates, and He hastened to add to His first qualification a second and crowning one: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart."

The meekness would last. It would always remember that it had a high standard above it and a host of good qualities to attain to, because the meekness always would be humble of heart. Every one, therefore, would troop into the school of Christ, welcomed with a glad, abiding smile, with no shadow of a ferule lurking in the back ground. Even the bruised reed would enter there and have its fragile and torn fibers not crushed to powder, but mended into wholeness again. And the smoking flax would come in full confidence that the gracious, condescending Teacher would stoop even to its feeble lowliness and with the breath of charity kindle its dull, faint spark into the glowing flame of life.

Yes, humility is a daily virtue in the great classroom of Christ, and pride daily haunts the schools of the Pharisees. Humility stoops, but pride holds its head high, treading on insignificant straws and stamping out the impertinent smoke of smouldering weeds. Both have their yokes and burdens; but, whereas humility studies carefully the weak muscles and tender flesh, fitting all with gentle, loving fingers, pride haughtily casts its yoke upon its slaves and arrogantly orders them to drag their cheerless burdens. Humility says with kindly voice: "Friend, go up higher." Pride thunders at its shame faced followers: "Give this other man place." Humility and pride begin all their sentences in the same way, but end them all in opposite ways. Pride cries: "I am not as the rest of men; O God, I give thee thanks, I am not unjust." Humility whispers, "I am not as the rest of men; God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

How well humility was taught in the school of Christ is evident from the object lesson he gave in that virtue. The Pharisees were the forbidding examples of pride. They were prominent, loved the first places, advertised their piety, trumpeted abroad their good works. Whitened sepulchres, cold and unyielding, was a good name for the proud people whom all should shun as they would a graveyard. Far other was the model of humility. In a splendid exhibition of true teaching, meek and humble teaching, Christ introduced His standard of humility to His Apostles. The child is the object-lesson in this great virtue. The child is too small to look down; it looks up to others. It is too young to know it has excellences. It is too healthy and active to pose before a mirror. To be proud one must reflect and be self-conscious. Children do not know that they are virtuous, and they could not remember it long enough to be proud, if they did know.

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A true teacher must ever be humble. He is forever coming down to another man's level. Judged by that standard, how humble is the Heart of Christ that stooped from the highest heights of divinity to the level of our humanity! To have humility it is not necessary that one should be capable of pride or sin. The mother loves all the more intensely even though it is impossible for her to hate her child. The Heart of Christ could not sin, could not have defects, and yet It had the truest humility, because with all truly humble hearts It saw that Its riches came from God. Without God It would be poor and nothing. Christ need not have felt the humiliation unless He chose; but He did choose and did feel it.

Consider the successive depths of humility to which the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity descended. The Heart of Christ is the flower of the sublimest humility, stooping from Heaven to earth, the subjection of the divine to the human, an act which Saint Paul made his supremest effort to describe by the words, "emptying Himself and taking the form of a slave." Even in that infinite plunge there were deeper depths. Christ need not have subjected Himself to the conditions of human birth, the nine months, the swaddling clothes, the nursing, the ills and helplessness of infancy, the growth in wisdom and age. Had Christ come in the fullness of manhood, He had avoided all that; but should we have had the same realization of His humble Heart? The Heart of Bethlehem and of Nazareth was not more humble than that of His public life, but it seems so to us, because we come closer to It.

Still deeper did Christ's humility go. He put Himself below men's whims and desires, men's ignorance and vices. He was perpetually renouncing Himself and perpetually conforming to others. In a sense He renewed every moment the humility of the Incarnation. His humanity, had He so desired, would from the first have been transfigured and

glorified; but He clouded the divinity under the ordinary exterior of the ordinary man. Thabor lifted for a moment the eclipse of His humility, but His Heart enshrouded Itself once more and every moment denied Its assumed nature the manifestation of the splendor and loveliness and joy of Heaven. Yet, other and deeper abysses of humility yawned before that Heart, and down them It descended. At the feet of Peter and Judas, beneath the scourge of the soldiery, under the crown of mockery, upon the cross of shame, into the desolation of the malefactor's tomb, thither the humble Heart brought the tortured human nature.

Surely, in the Passion the Heart of Christ sounded the fathomless depths of humility. Ah, no! It created a profounder void still into which it lowered Itself. In the Incarnation Christ emptied Himself of His divinity to become a man; in the Eucharist He emptied Himself of His humanity, it might be said, to become food and drink. The Heart that could stoop to the bruised reed has passed into the ground wheat and the crushed grape. As the pupil watches his Master casting Himself down where depths descend upon depths, it will not be so hard to stoop from the level of manhood to the slightly lower level of childhood. Jesus, humble of Heart, make me one of these, Thy little ones!

# The Penitent Heart

*He hath sent Me to heal the contrite of heart.*

Sorrow for sin is consoling. The fretting of soul because we have not come up to our own expectations is not true sorrow for sin. Sorrow for sin arises in a conviction that we have not come up to God's expectations. Remorse is indeed painful, but then remorse is the clamor of conscience scolding the soul for its failures; it may lead to sorrow for the past, or the rebuke may be silenced by new and repeated excesses. No; true sorrow for sin is consoling. Pride may chafe us because we are not as good as we thought we were; right reason may torture us because we have acted through passion and wrong reason. Sorrow for sin, however, is humble and is submissive and obedient to right reason. Penitence is the healing of the contrite in heart.

When Christ, our Lord, asserted at Nazareth his claim to be the Messias, He said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He hath sent Me to heal the contrite of heart." These words of Isaias which our Lord applied to Himself do not mean that He came to heal the hearts broken and saddened by sin only. "Contrite of heart" includes all broken hearts, although by far the larger number of those who feel the touch of Christ's healing hand are the hearts broken by the weight of sin. The Messias came to console the penitent.

But are not tears the desired accompaniment of sorrow, and are not they the outward sign of desolation? How then can sorrow for sin be consoling? The answer is that tears may exist without penitence, and penitence may exist without tears. The pressure exerted by sorrow for sin is not upon the lachrymal glands, but upon the heart. Agitation of soul may fling off a few tears, as a storm whips the sea into flying



flakes of spray, but it calls for a power in the sky mightier than a wind to lift the whole sea landward in a surging tide; and the power of penitence is not to be measured by falling tears, but by the lifting of the heart in response to the grace of God.

Nor are all tears scalding. Who will believe that the tears of Magdalene which fell so fast upon the feet of Christ were signs of desolation, and not rather proof of her abundant love, gushing out with the fullness and refreshing softness of a "long day's raining"? The tears of penitence are rather the overflow of God's grace. As long as the heart clings to sin, refuses to relinquish the hold of unlawful passion, and looks with satisfaction upon the past, so long is there a barrier to God's grace. Let the heart, however, turn from what it before chose, and undo, as far as it can, the past; let it turn to God with an apology for contrition is an apology of the heart to God then the barrier is lifted and God's grace rolls in with a cleansing flood, and the pent-up heart finds relief in tears. Magdalene was in desolation, perhaps, as, dry-eyed, she faced the staring guests at the banquet. Magdalene was in consolation when she gazed upon our Lord with tearful eyes. There is a rainbow of hope in every sky looked at through the shower of penitent tears.

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Saint John Chrysostom has said that sorrow for sin is the only healing sorrow. Tears cannot recall a friend, staunch blood, close a wound, open a grave or cure any other pain or loss, but tears can heal sin. And why? It is because the Heart of Christ put the healing power there, because His love sweetened the bitterness of tears. In the Garden of Olives our Lord made an act of contrition for the sins of mankind. As we all sinned in Adam, we all repented in Christ. He was "made a curse for us." "Him, who knew no sin, He hath made

sin for us, that we might be made the justice of God in Him." Yet the act of contrition in Christ's Heart does not supply wholly for the act of each soul. The sinner himself must give up his own sin, but, having done so, every thing else before and after that act of the sinner's will is the fruit of His grace. It is grace which prompts the act, sustains and elevates the act and blesses its results in time and eternity. Our own freedom must save our souls, as our own food must give sustenance to our bodies, but Christ's love, with more than the completeness and wonder of a mother's love, prepares the food for our wills, made more helpless than infants by sin. We have but to co-operate with His grace.

Consider the perfection of the contrition found in the Heart of Christ. He could not be touched with sin, but "He was reputed with sinners and upon Him was laid the iniquity of us all," and for all He made reparation and sorrowed, including in His sorrow every quality found in our far weaker contrition.

Contrition should be interior, in the heart. "Rend your hearts, not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God." The rending of the Heart of Christ is witnessed to by a thousand messengers who have hurried out by every way they could to tell us in a language that cannot lie, the language of blood, that the sorrow of sin is crushing His Heart. The rending of His Heart is eloquent in the words in which He voices His contrition: "Not My will but Thine be done." From the will, that is, from the heart, came that act of contrition.

Contrition must be supernatural. God must enter into the sorrow for sin. The Heart of Christ expressly excluded all thought of self, all motives that led away from God. Even the passing of the chalice that God's justice held to His lips was not to be effected by His will. God's will might remove it; His will would not. So then the draining of the chalice was

accomplished with the purest unselfishness: "Not *My* will but *Thine* be done."

Contrition should be sovereign. Never had a heart to make more fearful reckoning between the worth of God and the price of sin than the Heart of Christ made, and never was the infinite value of God's law asserted more emphatically. On one hand was the whole Passion to come, with all its tortures of body and soul; on the other hand was God's justice. Christ accepted the sorrow, the suffering, the disgrace and death. He laid His Heart upon the altar of God's justice and was Himself the priest who completed the sovereign holocaust: "Not My will but Thine be done."

Contrition must be universal. Was there a single sin exempted from God's will? Was there a single wish of God's will that was not embraced by the Heart of Christ? Was there a single pang of pain, a single twinge of sorrow, a single drop of His blood excluded from the generous offer of Christ? There can be only one answer to these questions. The "My" of Christ included all that the "Thy" of the will He addressed included. "Not My will but Thine be done."

It is, then, that great act of contrition which sweetens the chalices of our penitence; it is the signature of Christ's blood which gives value to what would be worth less paper in our soul's sorrow; it is the Heart of Christ which heals the contrite of heart.

# The Wounded Heart

*Bring hither thy hand and put it into My side.*

One kind of a heart-wound is inflicted by the loss of those we love. The separation may be brought about by estrangement or by death, and who shall say which wound is deeper or more painful? Who sorrowed more, the widow of Nairn or the father of the prodigal? Bride, in all your blossoms and beauty, which will you have, the dark weeds of death or the dismal parting of the divorce court? God forbid you should have either, or that the heart which now beats happily beneath the blossoms should ever bleed. Now, Christ's Heart was wounded that ours may be healed. He says to every heart: "Peace be to thee," and invites every sorrowing soul, as He did Saint Thomas, to find its solace in His open side. "Bring hither thy hand and put it into My side."

Death indeed has its sorrows and sharp is the edge of its reaping-hook. In many a home the voice once heard is heard no more; its echoes have died away. The eyes that glistened there with the regret of a daily departure, the smile that flashed with unfailing brightness a daily welcome, all have disappeared in gloom, and the household look and listen in vain. A familiar shadow will never more darken the door; a well-known step sounds no more on the stair-way, and the chair in the family circle, vacant forever, is a sad companion in the gathering twilight. Yet even that wound will be closed by the healing touch of time and by the blessed forgetfulness that comes with new duties and new affections. The tomb is final, and, bad as it is, we know the worst. But the wound of separation stays open longer. Estrangement is a daily death, and is ever presenting to the

apprehension new fears, more dreaded prospects. The heart made vacant by a death may be filled again with new growth, but the desert sands of living separation put forth no blooms to refresh the aching gaze. The widow's son is at rest in the graveyard, where she may go and pray, but the prodigal's father is ever on the torturing rack with rumors of riotous living and famine and disgrace and filth and starvation, and is oppressed by the darkening despair that the prodigal, as often happens, will never come home.

It may be hard, or even impossible, to determine which of these two wounds of loss death or estrangement is the more painful, but there can be no doubt that another kind of heart-wound, the wound of pride, gives the keenest of all tortures. The heart wounded by pride often develops a running sore. It does not, and will tell you it can not, forget as those bereaved by death can do. Pride is, in reality, the cause of the worst anguish in estrangement, because what chafes in such separations is the thought that other persons have been preferred to us. How long is the life of a compliment? No one has yet determined the age to which it will attain. For years and years a compliment is music and fragrance to the memory. But if a compliment is long-lived, a humiliation is immortal.

The wounds of pride fester because a poison has tainted the weapon that made them. If a humble heart is wounded, it is not surprised. It does not identify itself with the universe, does not consider itself the crowned king of creation. But every affront or quarrel or humiliation for the proud heart is an offence against kingly majesty. The wound may be concealed; it refuses to be cured. To be cured, pride must go out of itself, and it would not be pride if it did that. Humility feels the hurt, but it does not feel hurt. Pride transfers the wound to personality; it recognizes a defeat; it smarts from another's superiority. In a foot-ball game the ball is only a

distraction, while twenty-two souls and bodies grapple for mastery; the real issue of endurance and tactics could be determined just as well with a pin-cushion or a rope's end. In a wounded heart, in like manner, the real issue is not the word said or the deed done, but the fact that one king is rolling in the dust and feels the heel of another upon his neck. That feeling is the poison which festers; that is the heart-wound which does not heal.

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"Bring hither thy heart and put it into My side." So says the Heart of Christ risen from the dead. Christ went about consoling His stricken ones during the days that followed His Resurrection. Mark His wonderful condescension, King Pride, who art enthroned in the wounded heart; mark how He submits to the conditions imposed by Thomas, how He humbly bows to his follower's haughty, "I will not!" It is the evidence and practice of God to draw good from evil. Never was there a more striking instance than here. Should we ever have known that the way into Christ's Heart was open except for Thomas's lack of faith? Perhaps not. At all events, there is no doubt about it now, that, when Christ glorified His body, He did not remove His wounds, but kept them to console us. The first stage in the consoling of wounded hearts by the Heart of Christ is the restoring of faith. "Bring hither thy hand and put it into My side; and be not faithless but believing." A wound is not a reason for loss of faith in man and God. The wound of Christ is a proof of His Divinity. Christ has not promised that our hearts will not be wounded, but He has proved that our wounds will be our glory; He has proved that if we go down into the dark hollows on the sea of sorrow, we shall mount again to the heights of joy. The trough of the wave of Calvary rose to the white crest of Easter.



The Heart of Christ is the healing of wounded hearts because He has traveled all the ways of loss and separation. We can enter upon no path of sorrow where His cross has not cast its shadow, where His feet have not left footprints of blood. He entered, too, into the valley of death. His body was made, it could be said, for immediate immortality, unlike ours, which must pass through dust to immortality. So, besides the deaths which through life wounded His Heart, Saint Joseph's and that of Lazarus and of many others, His own death, the separation of His soul from His body by death gave Him the sharpest of wounds, and it was especially hard for His Heart to die, because death was not Its due.

There was, then, no wound of death which His Heart did not feel, and there was, too, no wound of estrangement which He was not called upon to suffer. He felt the exile from friends in Egypt. If Mary and Joseph sought Him sorrowing, much more did He sorrow staying away from them. These were but shallow wounds if measured beside the gashes of His Passion, when His people abandoned Him and His Apostles, and when by His own wish His mother was forced to abandon Him, and when, finally, deepest of all wounds of estrangement, the cry was wrung from His lips, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

"So, you also who have a heart wounded by a humiliation, bring it hither and put it into My side," Christ says to us all. "I who am true King and God of all, have been humbled to the dust. The hand behind the spear-point was one to which I was reaching out My hand that I might grasp it in love and lift a soul to Heaven. Many would have festering heart-wounds if the one to whom they gave a cup of water would cast it in derision into their face. I gave of the brimming contents of My Heart, and mocking insulters have flung My useless, unavailing Blood back upon Me. More than that, wounded heart; the very blow which festers within you fell

upon My Heart. This is no exaggeration, no figure of speech. I died for all sins and for the selfsame sin which wounded your heart, and because I know God better and understand sin more fully, and because, too, I love you better than you do yourself, the wound that was dealt you was dealt to Me and gave Me more intense pain than it did or could possibly give to you. Bring hither, then, your heart, whether wounded by loss or humiliation, and put it into My side, and you will find there a Heart more deeply wounded."

# The Saintly Heart

*From the heart come forth evil thoughts.*

Holiness is of the heart. When that truth was obscured and almost forgotten, Christ made it clear and certain. Christ was our Jesus, our Saviour, and He was likewise the Saviour of man's heart. The Pharisees had made saintliness an external thing, a matter of ceremony and routine. Christ did not condemn the externals, but He placed the saintliness within. He put a heart behind the ceremony. On one occasion, among many, Christ asserted the dignity of man's heart in the strong language which characterized His teaching against the Pharisees. They had complained: "Why do Thy disciples transgress the traditions of the ancients? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Christ, made answer: "Not that which goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man. But the things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart. For from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands doth not defile a man."

"Out of the heart" are the momentous words that proclaim a far-reaching principle, a revolution in morals, an emancipation from traditional slavery, a declaration of independence from mere formalities. "Out of the heart" transferred morals from manners to man, from the hand to the heart. The heart makes good and evil, because the heart is free, and man should be more anxious about cleansing the heart than washing the hands. Christ's purpose must not be misunderstood. He no more condemned fasting here than He approved of gluttony. His purpose was to refer holiness to its

proper source, to restore the heart to its lawful throne. Fasting may be holiness, or it may be hypocrisy, and it is the heart that makes the difference. Neither does Christ condemn the washing of hands. To wash the hands may be an aid to holiness; it will not constitute holiness. Christ did not wish to abolish ceremonies; He wished to abolish superstition, and formalism, and hypocrisy. He would restore circulation to the heart, and then there would be adoration in spirit and truth united with the appropriate expression of both in word, in garb, and in ritual.

The purpose, then, of Christ was to put the emphasis in the right place. There is a tremendous significance in the words, "out of the heart." They designate in the case of sin an act of man's free will, deliberately choosing evil instead of good, or making the choice out of an evil motive, or permitting the act of the will to lack its due perfection. The one who dips his hand in the mud with evil intent to cast it upon another, has a soiled object, a soiled hand and a soiled purpose. "Out of the heart" may come deeds thrice stained; stained because the heart's object may be evil; stained because the heart's action may be evil, like the soiled fingers; stained because the heart's motive may be evil. Out of the heart may come deeds bearing but one of these stains, yet teeming with dread consequences. It is that standard of morality set by Christ that makes all the difference in the world, or, rather, which makes an eternal difference. No detail of life that comes within the scope of man's free will escapes the influence of the heart. Every detail comes from a saintly or a sinful heart and bears with it the seeds of everlasting consequences. A man builds a monument. How long will it perpetuate his name? For a few years only. "Out of the heart" come monuments untouched by the ruinous finger of time. Man can send his thoughts and his voice over the land and across the sea. "Out of the heart" reaches a wire which sends man's soul over the wide chasm of the

grave into the unending depths of Heaven or hell. Christ restored freedom to man's heart, but did not take away the heart's responsibility.

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Out of the Heart of Christ! Who shall measure the richness, the saintliness issuing from that sacred source? The Fathers of the Church saw the birth of the Church out of the Heart of Christ on the cross, as Eve was born out of the side of Adam. The water and blood were the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Eucharist. Striking picture of a more striking reality! Out of Christ's Heart came the sanctification of mankind. It is the brimming ocean of all our holiness. The grace won by His opened Heart serves to purify our hearts. Every thought, word or deed, freed from the triple stain of sinful object, sinful circumstances, and sinful end, and bright with the corresponding triple good, lacks the evil and rejoices in the good because of Christ's opened Heart. There is not the tiniest atom of holiness in the universe which does not reveal to the microscopic gaze of faith a tinge of the blood which passed through the Heart of Christ.

The Heart of Christ is holy because It is the cause of all created holiness, and, further, It is holy in Itself. Christ was God, and, as such, infinitely holy in many ways, and especially in the way of purest love. Sin is the embracing of evil by the heart; sinlessness is the embracing of good, and infinite sinlessness is the love of infinite good. God's holiness is infinite because His love is infinitely pure. Its object is God Himself; its motive is God, and there is no stopping short of infinite purity in the perfection of the act of love in itself. Love in God measures up to the level of His knowledge of Himself. The will which loves, will love as intensely and as extensively as it knows, and in God the knowledge of Himself is infinite. The object, the motive, the

act may be stained in human love; in God they are all infinitely pure, and His holiness is infinite.

Christ as man participated of the holiness of God. We are indeed made holy by the vesting of our souls with God's grace. That created gift of God makes us, as Saint Peter says, "partakers of the divine nature." What, then, must be the holiness of Christ, to whose human nature God Himself is united, not by the unstable bond of grace, but by the union, permanent and intimate, of His Second Person. And mark! Christ was not denied the fulness of created grace. He was to be the perennial source of all created holiness and "of His fullness we all have received." The Heart of Christ is holy by union with the infinite holy Person of God, and holy with as much grace as a created soul is capable of.

We are bewildered with the splendor of this holiness. Our eyes are fixed on the central fiery core of an unblemished sun, where the trace of an imperfection could not survive for a moment in the purging whiteness of love's purest heat. We are watching the flames that blend and rise to God from the Heart of Christ. No wonder that artists have crowned that Heart with a blaze of light and pictured It as consumed in Its own splendor.

The observance of law is the test of love as it is the expression of holiness. "If you love Me, keep My commandments." This is Christ's own test, and fully does His Heart measure up to it. The law is the manifestation of the will of the law-giver, and holiness is found in abiding by that will. The ineffably pure affection of Christ's Heart loves God for the sake of God alone, and loves Him perfectly. His commandments become Its commandments, for love makes the will of the law-giver the will of the lover, and so law is transformed and passes into its perfect state in that fervent fusion of love's making; law becomes love, and love



becomes law. So it is in the saintly Heart of Christ, and so it is in every saintly heart that is modeled after His.

# The Rich Heart

*Out of the abundance of the heart.*

Artists and people of artistic tastes are much concerned about the wreaths and eagles and heads that are cut upon our coins. The practical business man looks to the metal and its purchasing power. We are all minting daily a multitude of coins, and the angel treasurers of the vaults of Heaven do not spend as much time looking for our profiles and dates as they do in sounding the metal to test if it rings true and will pass currency in the kingdom of Heaven. Christ was a keen merchant in the business of the soul. Witness His parables and see that buying and selling had no mysteries for Him. So when the Pharisees would pass off their worthless money upon Him, He knew the counterfeit at once and cried: "O generation of vipers, how can you speak good things whereas you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

There will not be gold at the lips if there is not gold in the heart, is the teaching of Christ. The rich heart makes the rich word. "Out of the abundance of the heart" means "out of the riches of the heart," and this is clear from the signification of the word in the original text, as well as from the words that follow: "A good man out of a good treasure brings forth good things; an evil man out of an evil treasure brings forth evil things." The words may be as artistic as you will; they may be colored with poetry, or warmed with eloquence, or freighted with the rarest knowledge. All that is mere mintage and tinsel, and not itself precious metal in the sight of God. It need not necessarily be base metal, either, but its purchasing value in the mart of Heaven will not be greater than would a double eagle made of golden butter, unless

the treasure of the heart go with the treasures of art. Before men we may all pass for the character in the fairy story, dropping pearls and diamonds and silver and gold every time our lips part; but what of the output of the heart before the eyes of God? May not the words be paste and pewter and brass, or, at the best, lightly plated ware?

The question is a serious one. One day a collection shall be made of all our treasures and their values estimated. "But I say unto you," continues the Lord, in the same passage, "that every idle word that men shall speak they shall render an account of." There is a very dismal prospect, indeed! To think that all our idle words, our vocal tramps, the fleeting sounds into which we have put fleeting, vain thoughts, all that foam and froth of the stream of speech, is entered against us. Alas, poor lips that babble on heedlessly, of you we may say in the words of the Lord, slightly changed, "Out of the abundance of the mouth, the heart is silent." Idle words are the product of silent hearts. No man can say with the sinners in the psalm: "Our lips are our own. Who is lord over us?" Unhappily, our lips are not our own. God made them, and they are His, and must work for Him. An idle word is one that refuses to recognize God's ownership. Let the heart admit God's mastery; let the intention be renewed occasionally of doing all for God's services, and words will cease to be idle. There is then no need here of disturbing worry. The good Christian, trying to lead a good life, is by that very fact banishing idle words. Morning and evening prayers, the Morning Offering, Mass, acts of piety and charity, all these are evidences of a rich heart, out of which come few or no idle words. The mother who loves her child, never utters an idle word in its regard, because in every word is the refined gold of love. Every Christian who loves God has a heart rich in love and is rarely idle in words.

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Who can estimate the richness of the Heart of Christ? It is the incarnation of the love of God. "The love of God was made Heart, and throbbed among us," we may say, following the words and spirit of Saint John. The Heart of Christ is the symbol, the representation of the love of Christ, and so of the love of God. "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son." The ripest fruit of divine love, as we may say, interpreting the words, was the Incarnation. The Heart of Christ was created to put before us in a language we could understand the love of God. God so loved that He gave. What, then, are the treasures of Christ's Heart? They are the richness of Christ's love as God, and the richness of Christ's love as man. The beating of His Heart voiced both loves.

Consider, then, what was the precious coinage of Christ's lips. We may judge from their power. His words were omnipotent. They spoke to blind eyes, and they saw; to deaf ears, and they heard; to dumb tongues, and they spoke. "Peace, be still," He said to the waves, and they fell to sleep. "Be thou clean," He said to the leper, and the flesh at once grew wholesome, and firm, and ruddy with the glow of health. His words were stronger still, "more piercing than any two-edged sword; and reaching into the divisions of the soul and spirit; and discerners of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Sinful and sorrowful heard His words, and sin and sadness were sloughed off the soul like the scales of leprosy from the body.

Truly, a two-edged sword, edged with divine and human love! Every action of Christ was one because it was the action of one person, but it was twofold in being accompanied by the action of His human and divine nature. The white-hot sword, so the old theologians put it, will cut and will burn, and who will separate the smallest section of the metal which cuts from another section which burns? Every atom burns; every atom cuts. So in the fire of Christ's

word blended the flame of two loves. In the beating of His heart the ear can detect the harmony of two sounds, the melody of the greatest love that ever throbbed in man, and its harmonic melody of infinitely higher octaves, the love of God. Every word, then, of Christ was far from idleness. It was possessed of a divine and an infinite energy. It was the coinage of the gold of Christ's Heart.

Today we hear the same words; we witness and experience their might. The words of Christ are now on the lips of Christ's priests. "I absolve you," say the priests, imparting by those words of Christ the precious treasure of grace to the souls of men. "This is My body," says the same priest, speaking in the person of Christ. Immediately, by the transmuting power of the words of Christ, the crushed and baked wheat, poor, cheap substance that it is, is transformed into substance infinitely surpassing earth's rarest ores. Thus do all the Sacraments, every moment of every day, reveal everywhere to mankind by the enriching words of Christ the supreme richness of the Heart of Christ.

# The Heart of Faith

*O foolish and slow of heart to believe.*

Dark corners give pause to the steps of a child. What monster may be hidden in the shadows there he does not know, but the monster loses none of its terror for being imaginary and not real. The childish fancy huddles into the black gloom before it all the fearful things its brief experience has known, and adds to them new horrors, more towering heads, more fiery eyes and wilder looks, rougher hands with more mysterious weapons of frightful torture. What wonder the child is slow of step when a dark corner looms up before it! Was it not some such turn in the way of the soul, some dismal prospect peopled with apprehension that made the two disciples turn from Jerusalem the morning of the Resurrection to their home at Emmaus, and brought down upon them the rebuke, "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken"?

The heart of man is not far from his imagination. It will rush exultantly after fancied joys or lag reluctantly with leaden pace where the imagination has nothing but sadness and pain in view. Had this pair of saddened hearts trusted to faith rather than imagination, they would not have shrunk from the disgrace of Calvary or the fear of the Jews. Faith would have told them that if there had been no Calvary, Christ was not the Messias; that their disappointed hopes rested on a belief in some and not all of the things which the prophets had spoken; that the risen Saviour was on the way to the supper-room where the Apostles and disciples were gathered, just at the very time they themselves were leaving it.

In every heart there is a struggle between the swiftness of faith and the slowness of nature. Every act of the soul that merits the vision of God springs into being at the voice of faith. If I practise temperance for no other motive than to avoid ruining my wearing apparel by falling into the gutter, my virtue is natural, and has its natural reward. I save my hat. But if I would have the reward of God, I must be temperate because he told me that "drunkards shall not possess the Kingdom of God." If I obey nature I receive my pay from nature; if I hearken to the voice of God, I shall merit a recompense from Him exceeding great. So every thought or word or act that is to end in Heaven and in God begins in faith.

Ah, but nature is near to the soul, and is always advertising its rewards. The imagination is its advertising agency, and never were wares more temptingly described than by that agency, never more striking type for display, never more catchy engravings, never such flattering assurances of the best results. What will faith do to offset the nearness of nature and its alluring advertisements? How shall a man "stagger not in his heart but believe," when virtue seems gloomy, when the shades of the open confessional appear filled with horrible monsters, when the voice of vocation calls the soul along the way of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, at the very time that with a more clamorous insistence the advantages of riches and indulgence and license are cried up? The promptness of love must spur the hearts that are slow to believe all.

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"Behold I come" was the swift reply of God the Son to the call of His Father. "Sacrifices and oblations and holocausts for sin thou wouldst not," wrote the Psalmist and Saint Paul of our Lord; "then said I, Behold I come, to do Thy will, O

God." That cry of promptness created the Heart of Christ. Its first beat was an echo of that generous offering. The Heart of Christ, then, will lend wings to the slow of heart.

Yet it may be urged that the Heart of Christ had the vision of the Father, and so had the inexhaustible wealth of charity, but had not the virtue of faith. Very true it is "that we see now through a glass in a dark manner," but Christ "face to face." He had not the difficulty of obscurity that vexes our hearts in faith, but He had such a consuming fire of love and obedience as would have swept off in its rapidity a thousand greater difficulties, had they come into His way. It is no reproach to the sun that its splendor is not dimmed by the smoking wick which impedes the flame of the candle. Christ had all the excellence of faith in the perfection, the promptness, the generous completeness of His surrender to the will of the Father. "Behold I come."

Witness how all through life Christ was prompt in the face of obstacles which usually make us slow of heart to believe. If faith calls upon us to make what might be termed a plunge into the dark, although faith is rather a lifting on high in a flawless, unfailing and unfailing vessel of Heaven, but if faith is fancied to be a plunge, then the Heart of Christ plunged from above down to the nothingness of man. When the lights and music were attractive at Bethlehem, His Heart passed rather into the darkness of the cave and the lowliness of the manger. No unholy love could taint His Heart or make it slow to respond when God's voice spoke, but the perfect tenderness of His pure love for His Mother made the promptness of His sacrifice more keenly felt when He left her to be about the business of His Father in the Temple of Jerusalem or throughout the lands of Judea and Galilee. No sinful imagination could soil Him with seductive prospects, but His Heart was not slow when the more piercing vision of His mind brought before Him and upon Him the weight of all



mankind's iniquity. There was, it is true, a struggle, a resistance unto blood to comfort us when the weight of passion oppresses our weakness. There was a struggle that printed itself in blood-red letters for our reading. Yet the heart was true, was prompt when the test finally came. "Behold I come to do Thy will, O God"; "not My will but Thine be done." So, finally, in the last dark moments of Christ's life, when a heavier weight than sin fell upon His Heart, there was the same promptness, and the Heart which cried out as though God had forsaken It, shook off, if we may so speak, the slowness that dark desolation would have put upon It, and confidently and peacefully commended Itself to the Father's hands, a short while before the hands of men laid open with a spear that treasure-house of quick, generous love.

The heart of man, which is slow to believe, is quick as water to glide into various easy ways of unbelief. It is sorely in need of that steadying principle which swayed the Heart of Christ. What a restless creature is the wave of the sea! Who can balance one drop of water upon another? Who, then, can keep a million jostling, smooth, slipping, tiny crystal spheres quiet for the briefest fraction of a moment? And then the air, with its multitude of shifting particles ever in ceaseless agitation who can keep all that in rest when the lifting of an eyelash will disturb it? Now, bring the fickle air out over the waters and let it play upon that liquid restlessness, and you have a wave of the sea. Saint James took that wave as the type of a heart without faith. "Let them ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea, which is moved and carried about by the winds." The heart of man is no calmer than the surface of the sea. Over it sweeps a host of feelings which keep it ever surging hither and thither and forever pausing upon the verge of some new direction. Sorrows and delights, fears and encouragements, hates, resentments and angers,

attractions, infatuations and passions, whirl like shifting winds over the heart.

However, what tames the unstable wave and makes it sway in one direction will give also steadiness to the heart a principle from on high. Far off in the sky, the moon swings around in a circle and the great ocean moves obedient to its mighty power. The promptness of faith or love will make the unquiet currents of the heart docile and steady and quickly responsive. Loving obedience to the will of the Father made the Heart of Christ swift to hearken and act, and trusting obedience to the voice of God will prevent our infinitely weaker hearts from being slow to believe and act when a thousand agitations would swerve us from the right. The Heart of Christ is a spur to the slow of heart.

# The Loving Heart

*Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.*

Love was and is the first and greatest monopolist. The heart and the heart's object tend to union; they are jealous of any intrusion that would interfere with that intimate union; they form a closed circle and a closed circuit, through which the current of affection passes from loving to loved. The monopoly is not formed and completed at once. According to the teaching of our Lord, there are three main stages in the process: the transfer of the heart, the transfer of the mind, the transfer of all the rest. When Christ issued His warning against avarice and against making riches the object of love, He said that where the treasure is there also shall be the heart; that the light within becomes darkness; that the lover of wealth becomes the slave of mammon. Heart, mind and all are consigned to the treasure, and the monopoly is formed. The soul is enticed, entranced, enslaved.

For each stage Christ uttered a warning. Before you are enticed, before you lose your heart, consider the contrast between the treasures of earth and Heaven. Moth, rust or thieves destroy the treasures of earth. Beauty has its enemies as well as wealth. Disease is the moth that preys upon the fair face; age will rust the charms of youth, and death is the thief that is no respecter of the handsome form. Moth will attack the king's robes and rust will eat up the king's crown, and usurpers and successors will steal away his throne. Wealth, beauty or power are not safety-deposits for human hearts. There is only one place in the universe where moth-balls, rust-removers and burglar-alarms are not needed. If you are to be enticed into parting with your heart,

our Lord warns you to put it where it will not be moth-eaten or devoured by rust or carried away by thieves. Since the heart will follow the treasures, it will suffer their fate. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven."

The wish is father to the thought, and has, it might be added, a very large family. Can the pale clerk cooped up in the city remain long at the seaside without being tanned? Can the Eskimo take off his furs without feeling cold? The questions would be easy in the kindergarten, and in the class of physics the scholars would say that heat radiates constantly until all the environment becomes of the same temperature. What, then, will become of a pale, anemic mind when subjected to a blazing heart, or a thinly clothed mind when exposed to an arctic heart? The mind assumes the temperature of the heart. To say that the mind is thermometer to the heart is only another way of saying that the wish is father to the thought.

If the heart is in the cash-box, the mind will not be in the poor-box. The heart, which means the will with its desires, will bring the thoughts its way. Enhancement will follow enticement, or, as our Lord puts it, entering His warning against this second stage of an illegal monopoly: "If the light that is within thee is darkness, the darkness itself how great shall it be!" His meaning is that the mind is the eye of the soul, and whatever blinds it, blinds the soul. Passion and enticement, in a word, the heart buried in treasures eclipses the sight of the mind. "There are no ugly loves," some one has said. The loving heart keeps the rarest cosmetics for the object of its love. The mind, therefore, is bewitched, infatuated, entranced. The doom pronounced by Christ against this second advance in the process of evil love, is darkness, and He hesitates to determine its intense blackness. "The darkness how great shall it be!"

The last stage of love's degradation is enslavement. "No man can serve two masters." This is the solemn warning of Christ. Where a man's heart and mind are, there also shall be the rest of him. There does not seem to be any place for bi-metalism in the human heart. The single standard rules there, the gold of God or the gold of earth. A river cannot flow north and south at the same time. When the heart's currents wear out a channel for themselves and develop an impetus, who will turn back the strong floods? Some saints have been known to have been in two places at once, bi-located, as it is called. The heart cannot be bi-located. If it is heaped over with gold and swathed in greenbacks, then it is not kneeling in sack-cloth and ashes before God. A man may have both riches and God, but he cannot serve both. He cannot belong to two nationalities, to two opposite political parties. If he is of the race of God and an upholder of the views of God, then he is not of the race of mammon and his adherent. It is, therefore, Christ's solemn warning to the enticed and infatuated heart, exhorting it to avoid enslavement: "You can not serve both God and mammon."

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We have gone down to the depths of love, or, to use a more proper term, to the depths of passion. Passion it is which should be called monopolist. Love deserves a term of more noble memories and associations. Love is a conqueror and a king. Having, then, studied the degradation of passion, we now ascend to the lofty, glorious heights of love. It was in eternity and in God that love was born. It had there infinite good and infinite beauty to contemplate and cling to, but even that seemed hardly enough for King Love, the Conqueror. It longed for other kingdoms. It would have another treasure also, and a heart to put with it, and love created both. "God so loved the world as to give His only Son." The Heart of Christ was the creation of Divine Love. We

were the treasures of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The souls of men that have their moths and rust and thieves, the souls of men with coldness, neglect and sin, were His treasures.

When Christ spoke of the passion of man, of man having his heart in his treasures, He spoke in a figurative way. It was a striking phrase which told that man always longs for his treasures. But when God created the Heart of Christ, it is the strictest truth to say that the Incarnation was the realization of the first stage of advancing love. Where Christ's soul-treasures were, there also His Heart really came to be. "My delight is to be with the sons of men."

In the Incarnation was the first victory of love; in the Passion was the second. If human passion has its infatuation, so, too, has true love. The way the blood of Christ's Heart throbbed to burst forth and be shed for us, His statement that He had a baptism of blood to be baptized with and was straitened until it should be accomplished, His eagerness which outstripped the Apostles on the way to Jerusalem, the lavishness with which He poured out blood where one drop would do, with which He permitted a host of varied torments when one pang of one pain had been enough for our salvation, these are all overwhelming proofs that His love had reached the heights of divine infatuation and merited to be termed the "folly of the Cross." The light of His Heart was not darkened, as the light of earthly passion grows dark in its second stage. His light was resplendent, and, adapting His words, we may say: "If the light that is in thee be splendor, the splendor itself how great shall it be!" One would imagine that with these two conquests, love had extended its kingdom far enough. But no! Holy love has its slavery too, if we may call it so, though it would be truer to call it consecration. Love has always been a uniter, but the Heart of Christ has revealed to us unheard-of powers under

this aspect. His Heart leaped the chasm that yawned between Divinity and humanity, and united them. The Incarnation was the first wonderful union of love.

His Heart devised another union still with His treasures, the hearts of men, which staggers the belief and demands the testimony of God to establish its truth. What union is that? It is the union that He effects by His abiding presence in the Holy Eucharist and in Communion. No slave ever put himself so completely at the will of his master as Christ does for us. No love for men or for money brings about an actual physical incorporation between the heart and its object. The Heart of Christ, then, has attained to the highest heights of love. It enslaves Itself in the bonds of wine and wheat; It becomes our food and drink. It serves both God and men. Can love do more? The annihilation of the twenty-fifth of March, the "folly" of Good Friday, the daily consecration upon the altar, such are the triumphs and such is the climax of love's conquest in the Heart of Christ!

# The Burning Heart

*Was not our heart burning within us?*

Any find it hard to get over disappointment. If others disappoint them, they note the fact clown, say it over to themselves often during the day, stay awake thinking over it at night, and make themselves generally miserable for a long time. If they are disappointed in themselves, the disease is worse, and sometimes reaches a crisis in suicide. Self-disappointment is a subtle form of pride. Away back in the innermost recesses of consciousness is a little shrine, fragrant with the incense of self-gratification, illuminated with the lights of achievements great in one man's view and brilliant with the gathered bouquets, some sadly the worse for wear and water, of hoarded compliments. These are the furnishings of the shrine and group reverentially about the golden statue of self. The shrine has one persistent worshiper, whose knees never weary. Ah, but one fine day, as the sole worshiper turns at early dawn to his adoration, the thought of a failure occurs, a clear, undeniable failure. Will not a thicker cloud of incense hide it from view? Alas, it would, except for one thing: others know of the failure. Self has not come up to its own expectations, and the world knows it. Look at the shrine! The incense is burning rubber; the candles are





smoking wicks; the flowers are bah! take them away, and the golden statue is that of a calf. The new religion, with its high priest, temple and ritual, passes into dust for ever. If there is humility near, a better, truer religion will be built up on the ruins; if pride rules, then there is lamentation and the loss of all religion. A youngster once said: "I just ate two smooof bugs and two woolly ones"; and when asked why, replied: "Because nobody loves me." That was an early instance of self-disappointment. Older people, when deprived of their self-satisfaction, turn to drink or death instead of bugs. If many people saw them selves as others see them, the list of our suicides would be inordinately swelled. There is a notable instance of self-disappointment in the Gospels that had a more fortunate ending than is usual in cases of the kind. That surely was a sorrowful and gloomy set of Apostles and disciples which gathered together in shivering silence in Jerusalem, when Christ, their leader, had been killed as a traitor and a malefactor. They were the cold-hearted remnants of a lost cause. "We hoped" was their cry. The gorgeous sunset in which they basked had suddenly become a very thick and a very disagreeable and a very chilling fog when the Sun of Justice had set behind the hills. "We hoped" is the cry of self-disappointment, the lament of a cold, dark heart. Among that crowd were two whose hearts had become lumps of ice. Their thoughts turned towards insect food. Perhaps that would warm them up amid the general low temperature that prevailed. "Away from Jerusalem," said the cold heart, "and back to Emmaus!" Their gaudy hopes had burst. They heard whispers around them of the body of their Master not being found, but their cold hearts urged that these were tales of women, frightened and trying to frighten them, that it was before the light and that those early risers had seen a vision. "We hoped" quenched all their faith, all their humility. They had constructed a brilliant plan upon which the universe was to be managed hereafter. Divine Providence had not seen fit to

conform to their view, and their hearts were disappointed and cold, without faith, without humility, without hope.

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Our Lord had come to send fire upon earth. He surely needed a good fire as He drew near these two cold hearts. The task He had set Himself to do was done well and successfully. The ice was turned into a flame after being brought into contact with the Divine Heart of Christ. "Was not our heart burning within us, whilst He spoke upon the way?" That was their cry at the end. When "their eyes were held," their hearts were cold; when "their eyes were opened," they confessed that their hearts were burning. The Heart of Christ was the furnace in which their icy hearts had been placed and been melted and inflamed once more to faith and hope and humility.

It was not done all at once. A sudden transportation from the arctic to the torrid zone is violent. It was not so the Heart of Jesus worked. He came upon their hearts with the steady, melting, almost imperceptible force of the spring. They had humility enough to let Jesus draw near, and so merited the greater humility of confessing their condition. They listened humbly. He brought them to see that their hopes were childish, that the Messiah was too large for Palestine, too great for a kingdom of earth, that the death which had chilled their hearts was the very proof of the Messiah, the very battle which won Him His true kingdom. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so have entered into His glory?" They went out from the dictation of self and let themselves be taught. Yes, their humility went farther. They were willing to depend upon another. Here before them was a religious teacher who was building for them a better shrine of enduring hopes, and they humbled themselves to prayer. "Stay with us because it is toward evening and the

day is far spent." There was to be one more step in their progress. Jesus drew near. They welcomed Him and kept Him near. To bring the full force of His Heart upon theirs, He should come still nearer. "He took bread and blessed and brake and gave to them." With their hearts beside His Heart, they needed no longer His presence before their eyes. "Away from Emmaus," is the cry, prompt and resolute, "and back to Jerusalem."

It was our Lord's will to ransom us in the way of justice, to pay the price for us. His Heart consoles us in disappointment because He experienced the keenest pangs of disappointment. We shall have no path of sorrow on which to tread in life where we may not see the red foot-prints of the Saviour. Naturally, He felt the exultation of success. His Heart exulted in joy and it was depressed in sadness. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem marked the highest point of his exultation. The very stones, He said, would take voices and acclaim Him. The world is wreathed in smiles for the exultant heart and dances with its dancing. That sunshine of Christ's glory is noonday whiteness when set in contrast with the midnight blackness of His disappointment. His Heart when it sent forth that agonizing cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was not in despair, yet it was deeper down in blacker disappointment than that which has sent many a weaker heart to suicide. In that hour Christ's Heart paid the price of our consolation. Then it traversed the bleak and barren fields of arctic cold, and as its weakness became our strength, so its coldness became our warmth. There was kindled the fire He came to cast upon earth, fire to melt away the ice of pride from disappointed hearts and fill them with flames of faith and humility, surging through the burning hearts that touch the burning Heart of Christ.

# The Troubled Heart

*Let not your heart be troubled.*

An eclipse of the sun is full of terrors for those who do not know its nature. The high position, the lordly movement, the warmth and the splendor and the magnificence of the sun have made it a god for some minds. To see, then, that resplendent orb and its universal flood of daylight blotted out of the sky by a mysterious shadow could not fail to disturb and terrify its worshipers. Christ our Lord is the Sun of Justice, the light of the world, and true God. For three years He had filled the lives of His followers, and on the night before His crucifixion, as they saw and felt the shadows of death upon Him, no wonder their hearts were troubled. The mysterious solemnity of the Last Supper weighed them down. The betrayal of Judas had been revealed; the denial of Peter predicted; the departure of Jesus proclaimed, and their hearts shuddered as the light seemed to be shorn from Jesus entering the eclipse of the tomb. Christ knew the trouble of the Apostles, and He offered them the remedy for it. O troubled hearts of the world, hearken to the peaceful words of Christ!

Saint John has kept for us the whole treatise on troubled hearts. "Let not your heart be troubled," Christ says at the beginning of chapter fourteenth, and towards the end of the same chapter, after His teaching, He says again, "Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid." Jesus furnishes His followers, one after another, with motives of consolation. Commentators have numbered them, and one can hardly believe they have found them all. The Father's mansions prepared for them, the second coming of Himself, their own following after Him, the gift of miracles left to them, the

promise of the Paraclete, the indwelling of the Father, the peace of Christ which the world cannot give these are a few of the sources of consolation Jesus points out to the troubled hearts before Him.

But why enumerate and count the reasons for consolation? They are all resolved into one sufficient and satisfying reason, the person of Christ. He is the calm of every trouble; He is the answer to every difficulty. Christ began His discourse in the thirteenth chapter of Saint John, and He began it with love. "Love one another as I have loved you." Peter was the first, as we might have imagined, whose troubled heart voiced its difficulties. Christ replied that Peter would follow Him thereafter. Thomas, as blunt if not as impulsive as Peter, was the next to cry out in trouble: "How can we know the way?" "I am the way," came the answer. Then Philip, who on a former occasion thought that a few loaves and fishes were an insuperable difficulty to feeding a multitude, once more spoke with some impatience from a too matter-of-fact mind: "Show us the Father." Christ reproachfully complains of Philip's lack of knowledge, but the answer is the same: "He that sees me, sees the Father also." Judas, not the Iscariot, is the last to let his troubled heart find expression: "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us and not to the world?" Christ had meant a spiritual manifestation, and He makes answer that since as God He was one with the Father, He will come to those who love Him and keep His word, and He will love them and will abide with them. One after another the troubled hearts cry out, and in their sad cries our own troubles find an echo. They were our spokesmen, and in His replies through them Christ offers Himself as the solution of every difficulty. For our distrust He is the hope; for our wandering, He is the way; for our ignorance, the truth; for our unbelief, the fullness of belief; for our coldness, divine love; for our troubled hearts, the peace which the world cannot give. The person of Christ

is the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night when our hearts are in the desert.

But why should the person of Christ be so completely the end of every way which the sad heart may travel? The reasons are many. One may be dwelt upon which will show how the Heart of Christ bears with it the gift of peace. That reason is the personality of Christ's love. Love may be called the selection, the preference of personality. In that is the very essence and life of love. A person singles us out of many and prefers us and makes us the center upon which his heart's inclinations are focused. On the other hand, the torture of jealousy consists in the realization that our preference is imperiled. But is not the recognition of that preference, pride? Not where there is true love. In true love there is a humble wonder that we should have another's affection; there is a sense and feeling of complete unworthiness that another should give place in his thoughts to us and turn his heart to us.

There, too, in the same truth is the dignity of love as well as its preciousness. To drop personality out of view is to de grade love and doom it to a speedy destruction. Passion, or selfish advantages, or mere pleasure are all signs of a mortal, passing affection. Such brief desire we give to things. We have an appetite for a dish, a gratification in a trolley ride, a satisfaction for a tool, some excited interest in a new toy, but for a person we have love. Passion is proud; it makes itself the center and end of all. Passion is selfish; it exists but for its own gratification. As well eat your dinner to appease some one else's appetite as make passion unselfish. But love is humble and unselfish. It goes out to another and centers upon another, not knowing, not caring whether it will come back to self again.

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In applying this teaching to the Heart of Christ we are met with a difficulty. It is true that Saint Paul, speaking of the love of Christ, declares: "He loved me and delivered Himself up for me." But is that not unjustifiable egotism for Saint Paul to think that Christ singled him out as an individual for His love and for the supremest test of His love? We shall see that Saint Paul was not egotistic. We must not measure the love of Christ by our imperfect standards. He comes to each and every one whole and entire in Communion, and the whole wealth and preference of His personality comes with Him. His Heart throbbed and shed Its contents for every man, woman and child from the first to the last, but had I been the only one in existence, there would not have been one beat less nor one drop of blood less in the exhibition of Christ's heart-love. God is a person and has personal love for us all. His love is showered from Heaven upon us individually as if each were all. The sun would be just as bright, just as warm, if it shone on one alone, and now we all share it. Scientists tell us that in one sense each one sees a different sun, because the rays that lead the vision back are not the same in any two cases. Yet each and every one sees the whole sun. God's love, too, comes to each, and each can and must feel that God loves him with a personal, individual love. Saint Paul was right; God loves me.

It was, however, when Christ took a Heart that He made the personality of love tangible to us. To talk of the love of an infinite God is to talk in a somewhat unknown language. Our bodily nature is slow to understand what is spiritual and infinite. But tell us a human heart is interested in us, and we who have had friends and a father and a mother will know at once what the personality of love means.

It is, then, in the Heart of Christ that the troubled heart will find its surest consolation, when it realizes that all of His love is centered upon it. The mother will bend her head and

turn her ear and listen to her child, and in that action reveals her love. She soothes her child in sickness, and her love thrills through her touch. She looks upon her child, and the depth, the intensity, the light of her eyes speak more eloquently than ear or hand, or even voice, of the ardor of her love. What would men write, what convincing proof of the personality of her love would her children have, if they could see her heart which struggles for expression by means of the weak instruments of the senses! Now, in devotion to the Heart of Christ we are ever at the fountain-head of His love. Christ's life has become love; Christ's Heart has become in our language a person. We speak of It as of a person. The Sacred Heart is born; the Sacred Heart is crucified; the Sacred Heart dies. In every act and word and thought we think of His Heart. Everything speaks to us of His love for us. The King in European countries is an officer in different regiments, and honors them by wearing their uniforms. The many devotions which find their center in Christ behold Him, it might be said, clothed in varied garbs. But in devotion to the Sacred Heart we look upon Christ in life and death as clad in the red robe of love.

Therefore, troubled heart, Christ's whole life and activity is centered upon you, thinks of you. He listens to you; He touches you; He looks upon you, and you know His love. His life and sufferings are before you, and speak to you by His Heart, and your own heart is filled with the joy of that preference. "He loves me," is the refrain that should echo above all the din of trouble. "Peace be to you," is the cry of friends as they bid farewell. "Peace be to you," said Christ to the troubled hearts around Him the night before He died. "Peace be to you" is still the message sounding in our ears, the message of personal love, the message of a Heart to troubled hearts.



# The Sincere Heart

*Their heart is far from Me.*

In truth is the lack of agreement between the heart and lip. When we say what we do not mean, we are untruthful; when we say what we do not will, we are insincere. Insincerity is vocal hypocrisy, just as hypocrisy is insincerity in action. Years ago, therefore, when Christ wished to describe the Pharisees in fit terms, He quoted Isaias at them: "Well did Isaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: this people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."

It is well to note that it is not the absence of attention; it is rather the absence of intention that makes insincerity. Christ has not complained about the lips being far from Him, but of the heart being far from Him. If prayer or Mass or any other religious exercise is begun with the earnest desire to please God, the mere wandering of the thought from the words or acts will not make them insincere. To have insincerity, the wish itself must wander; the desire of pleasing God must be given up. If the thought flies off in any direction, the words will still ring true; the acts will not be mere acting as long as the heart turns to God. Children have a ball attached to a piece of elastic rubber. They know that the ball will fly off in any direction, but that it will come back, and will not be lost while the rubber remains unbroken. No matter in what direction the fickle thoughts fly, the heart must break with God before distracted thoughts can make us insincere. The thing that should worry people in this matter is, not whether the mind was distracted, but, rather, whether the will was distracted. It is best of all to have both attention and intention; it is not insincerity to have the latter without the former.

The fault of the Pharisees was that they laid all stress upon the exterior action and neglected or made little of the sincere heart. They accused the Apostles because they had omitted some ceremonial washing of one kind or another. They hardly noted or cared to note whether it was love of God inspired the exterior acts. The Pharisees would reduce piety to machinery. Religion would be turned into a collection of phonograph disks. Some of the ancients had certain religious formulas in word or act stereotyped, and all that posterity would have to do would be to reproduce the identical formulas. Christ objected to reducing the service of God to the heartlessness of a talking-machine. The heart is far away from a phonograph voice; Christ wanted lip and heart to be near, and the most successful spring or dynamo is no substitute in religion for the sincere heart.

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Christ had the sincerest of all hearts. His words rang true; they were the echo of a true Heart. His Heart had in its spiritual sense, from the first moment it beat, one and the same pulse with His Father's will, as it had in its material sense the same blood and beat with the Heart of His mother. The intention of Christ never deviated from the will of His Father. "In the head of the book it is written of Me, I come to do Thy will, O God," were the words on Christ's lips when His Heart began to throb. "Thy will be done" were the words on Christ's lips when, obedient unto death to His Father's wishes, His Heart ceased to throb upon the cross. All His life the sincerity of Christ in word and deed impressed every one. It was, no doubt, the note of sincerity as well as the wonder of His teaching that made His hearers say that no one spoke as He did. His slightest acts were marked by the like sincerity. His tears shed at the tomb of Lazarus drew forth even from His enemies the testimony of His sincerity. "Behold how He loved him," they cried. His constant rebuke

of the insincerity of the Pharisees is the clearest revelation of His own sincere Heart. No one ever stigmatized in stronger or more striking language than He the vice of insincerity. We fear almost to quote the simple, straightforward words, the strong pictures He made use of. Vipers, sewers, soiled dishes, sepulchres of bones, and other such terms which Christ applied to the hypocrisy and insincerity of the Pharisees, would shock the squeamish ears of modern congregations. Their tremendous significance, however, is an evidence of what Christ thought of the insincere heart, and a proof of the pure, crystal sincerity of His own. Insincerity was so loathsome in His sight that His imagination went to the basest and most disgusting pictures of human physical corruption to get a language to describe the grossness of the insincere heart. Our Lord is often pictured with His Heart revealed to our gaze, and that unveiled prominence has its lesson of sincerity, which may be made clear with the help of a simple English phrase. The one who wears his heart on his sleeve is a man who might desire to be insincere, but could hardly be so in act. To wear the heart on the sleeve is, in the meaning of the words, to have no secrets from the world, to be transparent to all observers, to have one's thoughts and wishes known even before they find expression upon the lips. The phrase is not always complimentary in English. It is often used to describe a sudden, effusive and trustful simplicity which passes for weakness in the opinion of men. The words do not, then, express a quality which most people would care to possess, at least for all the time. But there are occasions when all would perhaps like to wear their hearts on their sleeves. In the worry of a misunderstanding, when our hearts are right but our thoughts are perplexed and explanations seem only to add further complications; in the bitterness of sorrow, when the pressure would be eased and the poison pass away if all could be told as we feel it, and, most of all, in troubles of the conscience, where shame or ignorance of the right

terms make us halt and stumble as we try to tell our story; in all these cases it would be as great a gain to wear the heart on the sleeve as it would be to have the doctor be able to know our most embarrassing diseases without the confusing necessity of telling him. Then we should be glad to reveal ourselves in sincerity as well as in simplicity.

If any such occasion ever arises in our life, then we can turn to the Heart of Christ, which He graciously deigns to wear upon His breast that, with the proofs and tests of His love evident in our eyes, we may be attracted to Him who has no secrets from us and is pleased when we have no secrets from Him. Misunderstanding, sorrow, troubles of conscience will find relief in recourse to the Heart of Christ. He has demanded of us the humility of acknowledging our sins to His priests, but His Heart beating before our eyes in the full attractiveness of His humble, sacrificing love will draw us to put our confidence in Him, and with the strength of that sincere revelation to have courage to go on to the further revelation which His merciful justice has laid upon us as a duty. The Heart of Christ is not far from us. He has brought It as near to us as He could. He stands before us with It fully exposed. That revelation invites our revelation. There is nothing between His Heart and ours; there should be nothing between our hearts and His. His sincere Heart should be the forceful incentive to make our hearts sincere to Him and to His ministers.

Finally, Christ gives us the supremest revelation of a sincere heart. "This people honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me." The distance between the lip and the heart is the measure of sincerity. The nearer those two points are the greater will be the sincerity. Christ brought the two points together; He identified them. "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." What was the end? Not His death merely. Even beyond that He gave

testimony of His love; beyond that His Heart spoke. Under the pressure of the centurion's spear His Heart took lips, lips eloquent of the greatest love man ever had. There is the divine model of sincerity, of the heart-voice. Lips and heart are there one and identical. The Heart of Christ is the sincere Heart, speaking truthfully through red, rent lips of the true love within.

# The Unselfish Heart

*The multitude of believers had but one heart.*

That two hearts should beat as one is the ideal, it would seem, of human affection. Such heart-duets are scarce enough outside of poetry and fiction. In everyday life discord arises after a few beats, and the choir breaks up at the end of the first song. Heaven's ideal of harmony is something still higher. There are not two or more hearts beating as one; there is only one heart doing the beating for a multitude. There can be no discord; there is only one voice. "And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul." There were many veins and arteries but there was only one heart, a great, warm heart pumping life-blood through the innumerable ways, reddening, heating, enriching, invigorating innumerable bodies. One sun is the color and warmth and life of the human race; one heart gave color and warmth and life to the Christian Church. "The multitude had but one heart." That is, we believe, the greatest miracle of the New Testament; that is a convincing proof of the divinity of the Christian Church. God alone could accomplish that tremendous achievement, and so it was, for in the verse just before the one quoted you may read: "And when they had prayed, the place was moved wherein they had assembled; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." It was the Holy Ghost that took the multitudes of hearts, melted them in the furnace of Heaven and then moulded one heart for all out of them all.

What was the change wrought in that conquering, purifying fire, which made men's hearts lose everything individual, peculiar, private and selfish so that they blended and were moulded into one, unalloyed mass of virgin ore? A multitude

of sheep become one flock because they acknowledge one shepherd and hearken to one voice that they know. Every sheep has to give up its own inclinations and submit to the inclination of the shepherd. As long as they retain their own voice they are just sheep; when they take one voice they become a flock. All unity in some way begins with individual sacrifice and is perfected by one principle. What was the sacrifice, what the unifying principle that put one great heart into a multitude, that wedded, or rather that welded, multiplicity into unity? The answer is found in the words following those first quoted: "Neither did anyone say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but all things were common to them." The sacrifice each one made was of "his own" and the unifying principle was "common to all." Detachment and unselfishness are the instruments that in the hands of the Holy Ghost made the one heart. The fleshy wrapping of the human heart is called the pericardium and is made of tough sinew. It is painful to stretch it far. But the moral pericardium, the selfish wrapping around the human will is tougher still. The early Christians did not try to stretch it; they threw it away, and the Holy Ghost put all their wills inside of one large pericardium. They gave up all personal, possessive pronouns of the singular number. "Mine, thine, his," and the like make little hearts; "ours," or rather "God's," make the great, unselfish, one heart.

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What heart was more unselfish than the Heart of Christ? The hearts of the early Christians were once selfish; Christ's Heart never was. Their hearts were narrow, small and had to be enlarged; the Heart of Christ was made large from the beginning. It was made to hold God's love for men; it was made to hold all men. A great miracle, indeed, it was to identify the varied wishes of the multitude, and bring them

by detachment and unselfishness to unite in one wish; a marvel, to thrill all with the same common love, and turn all hearts one way as obediently as all the compasses of the world face one direction under the spell of the magnetic current. But Christ's detachment and His unselfishness are a divine wonder. Christ could not detach Himself from His Divinity. That was Himself. But to all outward appearances He had done so. The prophets saw Him detached almost from His humanity. "He was a worm and no man." Saint Paul saw Him detached from His royalty. "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." Something harder and more generous in our way of thinking was the detachment of Christ from His own will. His Heart, in the truest sense of the word, was not His own; It was the Father's and ours. Christ sacrificed for us the personal, possessive pronouns. "Not Mine," "the business of the Father," "the will of the Father," "the will of Him that sent Me," this is the language of Christ's Heart, the evidence of the complete identification of His will with the Father's will.

The possessions of the early Christians were anybody's because they were everybody's. Such too, was the complete surrender of the Heart of Christ to us. Its love is for all and yet as fully for each of us as if each were all. "He loved me; He delivered Himself up for me," cries Saint Paul, and everyone may say the same with like sublime egotism. There is not a single drop of blood in Christ's Heart that had any other purpose in coming into life, in continuing in life and going out of life than that. Every drop says: "I love you; I deliver myself up for you, and if you were the only one in existence, My Heart's blood would go out for you." There is the truly unselfish heart that holds the universe and loves all without ceasing to love each.

How eager that unselfish Heart was to show that Its contents had but one purpose, to be shed for us! His blood was



deeply stirred in the Garden at the spectacle of the Passion. It felt straitened until that great work should be accomplished. If the casing of His Heart would try to restrain that bubbling flood, then in Its supreme unselfishness It would know what to do; It would break through the barriers of flesh and form beads and streams of ruddy sweat, anticipating in unselfish eagerness the Calvary of the morrow.

# The Enlightened Heart

*Grieved for the blindness of their hearts.*

Blindness of heart is a strange phrase. The heart feels, worries, loves, but does the heart see? And how can the heart be blind? For us the heart more commonly means the source of willing and feeling, less commonly the source of thinking. But in the Scripture the heart often has the meaning of mind; yet always with a shade of difference. When the mind thinks the truth may be bright and clear, but cold, like sunlight in the Arctic zone; when the heart thinks, the truth is warm, like sunlight in warmer zones. The will is never far away when there is talk about the heart, and when our Blessed Lady was pondering the words and deeds of her Son in her heart, it was, we may be sure, no idle reverie, but a deliberate act of the warmest love that made her think and kept her thinking. Knowledge precedes love and love precedes knowledge. We will to open our eyes, and we see to will some more.

Blindness of heart is a strange phrase, but it is a serious one, and implies a state that filled the gentle Lord with grief and anger. Witness the vivid picture given us by Saint Mark: "And looking round about on them with anger, being grieved for the blindness of their hearts." There was a lightning flash of anger in the glance which swept the circle of Pharisees on that eventful Sabbath, and that flash, or the look of sad pity which succeeded it, should have found its way through the blindness of even a Pharisaical heart. There was something of the same vexation, though tempered with more grief, when our Lord had to reproach His Apostles for blindness of heart. The Pharisees were blind because they would not see, but the Apostles were blind because they could not see.

"Why do you reason, because you have no bread? Do you not yet know or understand? Have you still your heart blinded?"

There is a blindness of heart which closes its eyes to all light. Of such blindness there is scarcely question in the texts cited. There is, however, another blindness which falsifies the light, color-blindness, and another still which dims the light, a kind of short-sightedness. The Pharisees saw something. They saw the law. But like people whose eyes do not respond to red, they were blind to the spirit and the purpose of the law. The law is not an end in itself. It is made for a purpose; it exists for a purpose, and willfully to close one's eyes to that purpose is to be blind of heart. Christ gave them light enough. He taught them by reprehension, by action, by a miracle, by a clear and pointed statement of the spirit of the Sabbath law, but all this light was wasted on the Pharisees. Christ cured the withered hand before their eyes, and put his teaching into the terse balance of an epigram: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." All in vain! The Pharisees "going out immediately made a consultation how they might destroy him."

What is this terrible blindness which can resist so much light? It is pride of will. No one is so blind as he who will not see. To admit that Christ was right was to confess that they were wrong, was to submit to His teaching, to obey His decisions, to make an open acknowledgement to their own little world that they were inferior to their new teacher. His words were clear; His proofs were convincing, but their wills were proud and stubborn. They did not simply cover their eyes or close them with lids which might readily part again. Rather they blinded themselves, refusing to yield free obedience to the teaching of Christ. The Pharisees plucked out the eye of their heart and would not see Christ's

interpretation of the law. The Apostles were blind, too, but their blindness was due to a lack of light, not to a rejection of the light. Their vision had not been destroyed. It needed, however, to be rectified. When Christ told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, the Apostles understood Him literally, and were somewhat alarmed because most of their bakers belonged to the Pharisees. There was to be no more bread for them, they thought. Christ had to tell them that the leaven of the Pharisees meant the Pharisees hypocrisy, their evil doctrines, which would secretly permeate and corrupt the soul. He reminded His Apostles that He had fed thousands, and there were baskets of fragments over and above. But He talked to men whose spiritual eyesight was dim, whose souls were not lifted above the tangible and sensible, whose vision was hampered by the material and did not pierce to the spiritual. "Have you still your heart blinded?"

Blind of heart are those whose whole life is given to pleasures and to the gratification of the senses. Blind of heart are those who make wealth the only good and the supreme good. Blind of heart are those to whom applause is the sweetest of sounds, and a high position the greatest delight. All these do not savor the things of God. To speak to them of the delights of prayer, of the consolation of Communion, of peace of conscience, is to use a foreign language. They hear the words; they note the gestures; they cannot fathom the meaning. A man of no literary tastes cannot understand the enjoyment of poetry. It seems to him mid summer madness. A man of blinded heart looks on religion and its practices as so many mysteries, cannot imagine they possess any charm, and deems religious people weak-minded or unbalanced.

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The so-called nebular theory is a possible explanation of the universe; it may be true or further explanations may prove it false, but it will serve to illustrate a solidly established fact. The Incarnation witnessed the creation of another light, the light of the moral world. God had said: "Let there be light, and light was made." In the Incarnation He may be considered to have said, "Let there be love, and the Heart of Christ was made." If the primitive nebula, which theory conjectures, contained all the energy of the universe, the Heart of Christ which was God's love made flesh, is the burning source of all light, heat and motion in the universe of souls. Into the Heart of Christ was poured the ocean of God's love and out of It has flowed every drop of grace which has exercised an effect in this world. "Of His fulness we all have received." Out of the reservoir of His love, which God created for us at the Incarnation and opened for us upon the cross came the universe of grace, with its planets and suns and moons and constellations, that light up and adorn the firmament of the new creation, more brilliant than the firmament which God's Omnipotence arched over our head when He said, "Let there be light," and broader, because this arch stretches its span far into a horizonless eternity. From the brief splendor of the passing thought or wish which prompts to repentance or lights the way to higher virtue, even to the undimmed and steady radiance of the holiest soul's highest sanctity, all came from the fire kindled by the Heart of Christ. Apostles and missionaries carry that light into the darkness of paganism. Doctors and teachers explore with it the innermost recesses of baffling truths. The pastors of the Church from priest to Pope have the guidance of the light of the world when they lead their flocks along the ways which pass from night to eternal day. Christ is the light which enlightens every man that comes into the world, and the Heart of Christ is the center and source of that tremendous and unfailing energy. The light of the world was kindled into flame by the love of His Heart. In

the narrower world of the blinded individual the Heart of Christ is the light, the healer of blindness. Christ became a victim to laws blindly interpreted. His Heart was laid open in obedience to law. That spear is the fit instrument, and fit emblem of the blind law. A blind law is cold, is edged with sharpness, is relentless. So was that spear. Pride may be broken; it refuses to bend. The spear of the Roman soldier will represent the pride which blinds hearts to the meaning of a law. Ah, but God's law came in obedience, in humility, in love; it came in a Heart. Wherever love goes with the law, there will be no blindness to the spirit of the law. When Christ's Heart was opened on the cross, all blind hearts won the power to open their closed eyes to the light and to see, just as Longinus, the centurion, saw the light and threw away his rigid spear and became a saint.

The loving heart will not be blind to the purpose of the law, and the loving heart will rightly interpret the meaning of the law. Love will cure color-blindness and short-sightedness. The heart never forgets the person for whose benefit the law is, for the law is not for the pride of the ruler but for the good of the ruled. The heart does not miss the meaning of the law. The eyes of charity see all and see deep. When the hearts of the Apostles had been prepared by living with Christ, by seeing Him die, by feeling His love and learning to love Him in turn, when, in a word, their hearts were made like His Heart, no longer did they misinterpret His meaning. With the instinct of love, as a mother divines the need of her child, they went to the meaning of Christ's words. Some hidden selfishness, perhaps the urgent thought of their bodily necessities, made the Apostles hearts blind when they heard their teacher speak of the leaven of the Pharisees. There was only one kind of a yeast for them. But when love ruled supreme, they went to the heart of things. They understood and were short-sighted no more.

To cure blindness perfectly there is need of two things: of good light and of good sight. The Heart of Christ furnishes both remedies in full perfection for blindness of heart. His Heart it was, Love Incarnate, that became the light of the world. His Heart it was that gave good eyes to the hearts of men by showing them that love must enforce the law and love must interpret the law. By dying under the spear-point of tyranny and ignorance, the Heart of Christ won the grace for all to see, and It became the medium for all to see, became the crystal lenses of love rectifying the imperfect visions of men.

# The Heart of Sympathy

*The heart of this people is grown gross.*

Sympathy is the nurse for illness of the soul. It smiles with hope when we are despondent; it is gentle and soothing when we are in anguish, and when the crisis comes and the soul hovers between life and death, sympathy never leaves the side of the sufferer, easing the pain by every possible means and tempering the fever when it ranges alarmingly above normal. How sensitive sympathy is! It quivers like the eye lid and surrounds the object of its care as promptly as the lashes of the eye meet across the sight. Scientists tell us of a wonderful substance called ether, which bears the light and electricity upon its swift waves. The universe, they say, is poised in it as in a mass of infinitely light, palpitating, unresisting jelly. It seems to offer no opposition or resistance, responding to the slightest touch. Wonderful substance, truly, and almost in contradiction with it self! Yet sympathy is more responsive, more receptive than ether. The sun touches the ether, and in eight minutes that delicate substance has brought the touch to our eye, ninety millions of miles away, and we see the light. But sympathy is swifter. When the thoughts race, and thought is faster than light, sympathy outstrips them all. Sympathy even anticipates the slow mind. It is prophetic, it foresees. If sympathy is swifter than thought, its home must be in the heart, and not in the mind, and so it is. Surely charity is of the heart, and sympathy is nothing more than winged charity. Anything that will weigh down the heart will clip the wings of sympathy and fetter its flight. Our Lord and His Apostles looked for sympathy, and, we have sad reason to believe, often lacked it. Therefore, it was that a passage of Isaías, describing lack of sympathy, was often quoted by the



Apostles, as it had been by our Lord. In every Gospel, in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles, we find the passage mentioned or alluded to. Saint Matthew has it thus: "And the prophecy of Isaias is fulfilled in them, who saith: By hearing you shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is grown gross."

The heart that is gross (the word means fat, dull, heavy) is not sympathetic. Such a heart stops sympathy at the fountainhead; instead of being sensitive, it is callous; instead of being prophetic, it is blind and deaf. Such a heart cannot fly; it cannot crawl, but it is tied to itself and caged within the narrow limits of selfishness. The great English dramatist has said the final word on the last stage of the gross heart, lost to all sense and feeling. He describes a heart in which there has been not merely degeneration by the deposit of fat in the muscles of the heart, but the complete absorption of the heart in fat. "Duller should thou be," says the ghost of his father to Hamlet, "than the fat weed that roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf."

Not a single element of that picture should be lost, not "weed," nor "roots," nor "ease," nor "Lethe," the land of complete forgetfulness, nor "wharf," where the well-watered weeds grow rankest, if one would get a complete view of the gross heart which Isaias complained of, when he was entering upon his mission, and whose complaint our Lord and His Apostles found justified in the audiences they appealed to. They looked for sympathetic hearts, and in many cases found gross hearts that closed eye and ear and every avenue of knowledge to the message of Christ, hearts that would not let even a whisper of Christ's voice stir their weedy fibers as they slumbered in forgetfulness and ease forevermore.

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To have a sympathetic heart of the truest kind there are three requisites: unselfishness, knowledge and experience. As the magnet looks northward, sympathy looks outward. Sympathy is essentially unselfish; it is the flower of Christian civilization. In fact, there is a danger of overdoing sympathy in our day. The sentimentality that sends flowers to a murderer and ignores the widows and orphans of the murdered, that feels more for animals than for man, is not true sympathy. No virtue is found in excess or extravagance, and pity for brute beasts should not go so far as to arrest a New Jersey man for cruelty to animals or for heartless vivisection when he dispatches one of the pests of his native shore. Beside unselfishness, sympathy calls for knowledge. We must know another's sorrow and pain to feel for him. Nor is knowledge enough for the most perfect sympathy; experience, which, after all, is the ripest knowledge, produces the truest sympathy. The one who can say, "I have suffered the same way myself," is likely to have the most sympathetic heart. Now, where can these three elements be found in greater completeness than in the Heart of Christ? That Heart was utterly unselfish. It was made for others; it was a gift to us. It came into existence bearing an address, and it was addressed to us. A letter is not at all for itself; it is for the one to whom it is addressed. The Heart of Christ has the same unselfishness and its contents are wholly for us. Every drop of its blood is for us as well as all their gathered wealth in the precious receptacle of His Heart. Not a single soul of all man kind was excluded from His sympathy, "God so loved the world as to give." The gift to the world was to all. Christ does not withhold the blood of His Heart from anyone. It goes to everyone. If it does not reach its destination, it is because the human will rejects the gift. In our sympathy we transmit feeling by means of words; in Christ's sympathy His Heart brings blood to His suffering

ones by means of His infinite power everywhere present. Christ read the hearts of men. "He knew their thoughts, He knew what was in man"; these and like statements occur frequently in the Gospel. As God, He had the unique privilege, denied to everyone else, of being the searcher of hearts. Therefore, could the Heart of Christ be sympathetic. Then, as for experience of pain and sorrow, who that has read Isaias prophecy and its more than perfect fulfillment in the Passion can mention a species of pain or grief, or a degree of pain and grief which Christ did not experience in His life and death? Theologians have weighed and numbered His sorrows: saints have with the ingenuity of love described and valued them. For us all there is proof that we can see and hear. Our eyes are fascinated with the horror of His bloody sweat which reveals in lurid red how His blood fled in terror from the prospects of anguish and torment. Our ears are chilled with the cry of divine abandonment which springs out of the soul of Christ from the consummation of His torture.

The Heart of Christ must have been sympathetic, and a reading of His life-story shows that it was. Sympathy is the promptness of charity, the delicate refinement of the rarest love. To show all that in Christ's Heart is simply to rehearse the Gospel, take instances none can fail to understand. Children are most susceptible to sympathy. They do not reason about it, they feel it. The pretense of it can scarcely escape their detection. Then remember how the children flocked around Christ and felt at home near His Heart, whereas the well-meaning Apostles felt, we may imagine, as awkward as a locomotive colliding with the fragile lace of a spider's gossamer web.

Christ's dealing with sinners is another luminous revelation of His sympathetic Heart. The world of His day could not understand it. It would not, if it could, tread upon the same

earth with the sinner, Christ's Heart had no such unsympathetic aloofness. The proud, sensitive sinner who hardened into stone under the scorn of the world, melted into the tears of repenting sorrow, and followed the children into the circle of Christ's Heart. We are content to rest the proof of the sympathy of the Heart of Christ on the conduct of the mothers and their children, on the simple words of her who said, "No man, Lord," on the actions of Magdalene, on the tears of Peter, who succumbed to one glance of sympathy.

# The Forgiving Heart

*So also shall My heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.*

Parisians point with pride to their gigantic sewers and have arrangements by which visitors can go down to and examine the six hundred miles of tunnels, freighted with the refuse of a large city. No village, we believe, has ever conducted with civic self-satisfaction even one traveler to its humble gutters. It may be upon the same principle that great criminals achieve a certain distinction denied to the starving pauper who takes a loaf of bread. Perhaps some such idea possessed the mind of the servant in the Gospel who was forgiven a debt of twelve million dollars. Very few could point with pride to so gigantic a deficit in their accounts, and it should scarcely astonish us when the proud possessor of so great a distinction throttled a fellow-servant whose deficit was just fifteen dollars, or about a million times less. Unhappily for the distinguished criminal, the master of both servants was insensible to mere size as a title to fame, and, revoking the gift of twelve millions which he had made by canceling a lawful debt, he delivered the millionaire debtor to the torture until he should pay all. The amount of that torture is appalling, but more appalling are the words with which the story concludes: "So also shall My heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts." No doubt our Lord purposely made this parable striking in its details, details which are verified only where God is the master who forgives infinite offences and men are the slaves who forgive not petty faults. In reality, however, it is almost unbelievable that any master would let his servant accumulate so immense a debt, and almost impossible that any man would be so mean, so contemptible, so small of

heart as to turn around and throttle his fellow when he had so much forgiven himself. We say "almost impossible," because man's selfishness is so colossal and his imagination can so exaggerate his own troubles and so minimize his neighbor's troubles that no inconsistency of conduct is astonishing where wounded self-love and a heated fancy get to brooding on wrongs.

One great reason why forgiveness from the heart is so scarce among men is to be found in the exaggerations of self-love. No one deserves the consideration we are entitled to. Our wrongs are so great, are so personal, so intimate to us, that no one else, we think, can appreciate them at their true value. We can always see reasons why others should feel their wrongs less keenly, but in our case there was something about the person or the time or the manner of the injury that in our brooding and distempered minds we are persuaded that we have discovered a new, unheard-of species of sorrow ours. No doubt the servant in the Gospel was a victim of such stupendous self-love. Like the watch-maker, he screwed a microscope into one eye and turned its gaze upon the tiny little sum owed to him until it assumed gigantic proportions, and closed up tight the other eye, which ought to have been looking at what he owed to his master. He exaggerated others debts; he obliterated his own. It is a calumny upon the honorable profession of watch makers to liken them to unforgiving hearts. They, at any rate, have this consolation: their work is useful and necessary, and when it is over their countenance resumes its accustomed grace and beauty, but the unlovely, strained looks of an unforgiving heart never relax into peace and sweetness. Equipped with magnifying glass on one eye and an impenetrable blind on the other, the unforgiving heart shuts out the whole world and brings its bent, peering gaze to bear upon the life-long contemplation and distortion of its wrongs.

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Forgiveness of enemies was a virtue dear to the Heart of Christ. It is one of those virtues, like humility and virginity, which are so sublime and so opposed to the natural impulses of human nature that their revelation and teaching by Christ seems to many to prove His Divinity. Surely, then, if He may be said to love one virtue more than another, it would be one which was His own because He was the first to teach it to the world.

His revelation of this virtue was as perfect as it was new, and in that we may see another reason why the forgiveness of enemies was dear to His Heart. No one has conceived or can conceive a single perfection which may be added to this virtue as taught by Christ. The forgiveness is to be perfect in extent, including all; perfect in its promptness, letting not the sun to go down upon its anger; perfect in its practice, not calling another a fool, not exacting an eye for an eye, not harboring evil thoughts or judging him. So thought, word and deed were to be filled with forgiveness. The virtue was no less perfect in its continuous performance. The forgiving of trespassers was to be as regular as the petition for daily bread. There was to be no limit to the number of times it was to be exercised. Its exercise, if necessary, would reach the perfect number, "seventy times seven times." Forgiveness was to be the perfect badge of Christ's followers. "By this all men shall know you." It was to be perfect in its sincerity, forgiving from the heart; perfect in its sanction, because in what measure we mete to others, it shall be meted to us; perfect, finally, in its model and standard, because we are to forgive as Christ forgave, we are to be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful. If the teacher's heart is in his favorite lesson and perfect lesson, then forgiveness of enemies was especially dear to the Heart of Christ.

Forgiveness is difficult because self enters so fully into the wrong and because the wrongs have been so exaggerated by the imagination. The Heart of Christ, by meeting and overcoming these two difficulties is the model of the forgiving heart and the healing of all unforgiving hearts. If the unforgiving heart is selfish, the Heart of Christ is entirely unselfish. If the unforgiving heart exaggerates the faults done it, the Heart of Christ has endured wrongs and sees in them a malice which, because it is infinite, cannot be exaggerated. Away back in the depths of eternity, what was God's first view of the Heart of Christ? Some answer that He saw it as a vessel full of the fire of love; others, and they are more numerous, declare that the Heart of Christ never appeared in the thoughts of God as anything else than a suffering, wounded Heart, created to be crucified, to be pierced, to die. The symbol of Devotion to the Sacred Heart was never, so they hold, even in God's designs, to be different, if the Heart was to be at all. It was made to be a holocaust for sin. From first to last, and in every part of its brimming contents, It was destined for others and for the sins of others. It was to be the great peace-maker between infinite worth and infinite offence, between God and God's enemy. The Heart of Christ, then, had not a trace of the taint of unforgiveness. It was planned from eternity for forgiveness; it was created in time for forgiveness; it lived and died for the same Divine purpose. The Heart of Christ is forgiveness itself. It is mercy in its most winning and most perfect form, mercy made into a Heart.

How well, then, may the Heart of Christ serve as a model of the forgiving heart! No selfishness there; no acute sensitiveness to receive and retain wrongs. It was pure unselfishness, utterly flawless forgiveness. A diamond is transfigured carbon, changed from density and darkness into marvelous brilliance by the power of crystallization. Imagine all the carbon of the world collected into one mass,



heated to glowing incandescence, subjected to the necessary pressure, and allowed to cool so that every atom would fall into line in obedience to the marshalling forces of crystallization. Then you would have a diamond planet without a flaw or blemish, which would flash back the garnered sheaves of sunlight in blinding splendor. A poet's dream all that, you say. Yet the Heart of Christ is more wonderful still. Infinite love has transfigured It into total unselfishness. It gathers up into Itself God's infinite mercy, and pours it back upon the enemies of God, making every drop of His blood to reflect God's infinite forgiveness.

The unforgiving heart is not only selfish, but it exaggerates its wrongs. Humorists are fond of showing how a lively imagination and a poor nervous condition can bring upon a man more diseases in an hour than he could get in the contagious ward of a hospital in a century. Wrongs and offended dignity are, if possible, worse victims of the tyrant imagination than weak nerves. Does the Heart of our Lord meet this weakness of the unforgiving heart? It does, and most successfully. Let us take, unforgiving heart, the very wrong which infuriates you most, which has been turned into a monster by a heated imagination. The Heart of Christ felt that very same wrong, has seen in it not any false malice manufactured by temporary madness, but the true malice of it, which far exceeds the powers of imagination. His Heart is more tender than yours and has felt your wrong more keenly than you have, and has felt it longer than you have, because He felt it from His first heartbeat to His last. You are wounded for one reason, because you are offended; Christ for two reasons, because He is offended and because you are. He feels your wrong, because you are His brother, because your wrong is His wrong, because your wrong is God's wrong. There is, then, a malice in your wrong which Christ knows and feels in His Heart, a malice that is infinite. You think it is a great thing that you should be offended; our Lord

understands that it is an infinitely greater thing that God should be offended. The Heart of Christ, therefore, says to you, unforgiving heart: "I have understood your wrong better than you, have seen it so black that it could not be blacker, have felt it more deeply because it was more Mine than yours, have forgiven it after all, and have died for it." What will you answer to that appeal, unforgiving heart?

And yet that is not all the Heart of Christ has done. It has not only forgiven the wrongs done to it, but by a divine refinement of mercy and charity It changed the blow that was dealt It into a benefit for the hand that dealt the blow, and conferred on Its murderers the power of salvation and life everlasting in the very act in which they robbed It of life, dying for those who were killing It, saving those who were slaying It The blood that rushed from the Heart of Christ went speeding upon an errand of mercy, hurrying out to heal Its enemies and destroyers; it was warm, eternal, infinite forgiveness from the Heart.

# The Detached Heart

*The devil now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Him.*

The Irish orator, Curran, was very fond of trees. Near his house there was a very fine one, whose growth he watched with care, whose beauty he learned to love. As years went on, the tree grew and spread and finally encroached upon the house, blocking the light and pushing here and there against the walls and roof with its branches, seeking a chance to expand. "You will have to cut down that tree," said a friend to Curran. "I was thinking of taking down the house," replied the orator. The human heart has its growths, which it loves and watches and makes sacrifices to, and to meet that tendency we have the virtue of detachment. Detachment plants in the proper place, keeps rank growth well pruned, and if need be, lays the axe to the root rather than lose a greater good. It saves the house rather than the tree. For Curran the tree may have been more valuable, but for detachment the soul is more than its attachments. Detachment is at the head of the bureau for the conservation of spiritual resources. It does not permit the energies of the soul to be wasted or monopolized by passion to the exclusion of the soul's supreme interest, God Himself. Detachment, then, uproots or controls all attachments except one, attachment to God. The Gospel gives the complete history of a disastrous attachment which grew, which overshadowed the soul, and which finally destroyed the soul. Saint John tells us the last stage: "The devil now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Him." "You will have to give up that attachment for the purse," said detachment. "I will give up Christ," replied Judas. It was a question of the axe or the rope, and rather than lay the axe

to the root, attachment chose the rope. The devil had easy access into that attached heart.

The attachment of Judas did not grow in a day. To leave all and follow Christ shows no roots of avarice in the heart, but at least the seeds of the highest holiness Judas left all, yet, with the weak inconsistency of human nature, he let the strings of a purse wind about his heart, as Peter, with like weakness and inconsistency, was willing to face, and no doubt would have faced, a thousand sword-blades, but did not face the tongue of one maid.

Judas alone could tell us how attraction changed to inclination, how inclination blossomed to evil desire, and how evil desire branched out into the full growth of attachment. Then came the blocking out of the light, the overshadowing of dark principles, the unchecked wild struggle for mastery. This was the stage of deceit when attachment decked itself out as a virtue. "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pieces of silver and given to the poor?" asked Judas, and from the Gospel it is clear that he whispered this hypocrisy to the other Apostles. They were deceived, and in good but mistaken faith took up the complaint. There you have a picture of the essential meanness of attachment. It would not be too much to believe that Judas kept in the background, while his poisoned dupes fought his battles for him. Cowardice, meanness, hypocrisy, poisoning of souls, such are the deadly fruits of attachment. The final stage came when attachment was full grown. It staggers us to think that a man would sell another man, though the other was a worthless one, for thirty pieces of silver, for nineteen dollars and a half. That was the price to be paid for a murdered slave. Judas accepted the pittance with its insulting memories and agreed to betray Jesus. It was money or

Christ, and attachment, with its blinding, grappling hold upon the soul, had its way, and Christ was crucified.

No doubt other motives helped avarice at the end, but a full-grown attachment so exaggerates the object of its selfishness as to debase and pervert every other noble instinct of the soul. The shock of the completed crime alone opens the eyes again, and then God's infinite mercy must be grasped and held to or the heinous foulness of the attachment's cancerous growth will excite the loathing of despair.

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The successive stages of attachment are: love of earthly good for God and with God, love of earthly good and God, love of earthly good without God, love of earthly good against God. The Heart of Christ, which belonged to God, the Second Person, could never pass out of the first stage. It was and ever will be for God and with God. It does, however, give us a picture of perfect detachment, meeting and counter acting the various stages of attachment: the planting, the overshadowing, the final Struggle. When Christ, our Lord, looked into the world to choose a mother and a place of birth and a manner of life, all the attractions of earth lay before Him: wealth, honor, intellect, power, comfort, pleasure. He passed them all by and chose Mary, Bethlehem and Calvary; purity, poverty and pain. So the seed of every human attachment was banished at once from the Heart of Christ and therein was planted the love of virtue and holiness and of suffering. When Christ picked out a Heart for Him self, He took one that was wounded and girt with thorns. Attachment loves the velvet touch of pleasure and the crown of gold, and the noxious plant cannot grow beneath the painful points of the thorns and spear.

Christ also manifested to us His detachment in opposing the second stage of attachment, where vice masquerades as a virtue, when selfishness is substituted in the soul for God. It was in the desert that Christ allowed Satan to tempt Him and thus reveal to us His Heart, turning to naught the vain deceits of the evil one. It was not to open sensuality that Christ was tempted. Though the temptation was opportunely timed, coming after the long fast, yet it was subtly cloaked under the exercise of power. It offered a chance for self to indulge in deception, to seek the gratification of the flesh under the guise of doing good. Christ unmasked the tempter. No attachment to bread alone will give the soul life. Again, it was not to open pride of life that Christ was tempted in the second instance. The pride was deceitfully allied with the Temple, God's angels and God's Providence, circumstances that seemed to justify in self an exhibition of power. But it was not so that Christ was to assert His power in the Temple, nor was God so to be tempted. Then, finally, the evil one promised to crown self king of the world. Attachment enthrones the same king, and attachment uses the same means that the tempter used for Christ. Imaginary pleasures, imaginary power and glory, are spread before the bewitched eyes of the mind. Dreams of new worlds of delight, brittle and brilliant, are the deceitful creations of attachment. Christ bursts the bubble. Not self, but the Lord God alone is to be adored and served.

Christ is, too, our example and our stay in the final struggle against attachment in the death-grapple of soul and selfishness. In the hour of His agony in the Garden there were many sorrows that came to lay their burden upon the stricken Saviour, but of the presence of one heavy sorrow we may be sure. If ever the axe was laid to the root of attachment, it was in that hour. All the attachments of man come from and go back to one great attachment, the love of self. Self will let the soul be lost rather than lose its own

gratification. What, then, will self feel when not one or other pleasure is threatened but its own existence is in doubt? The love of life is more than the love of pleasure or power. In His agony Christ struggled with the attachment of all attachments, with the love of life. He saw, He felt His enemies, not simply severing one desire from His Heart, but laying the axe of torture and death to the very juncture of heart and life. "Not My will, but Thine be done!" The detached Heart of Christ makes the supreme sacrifice. It slays self, immolates attachment to life, and offers the holocaust to God. God is never overshadowed or crowded out in the detached heart, and Christ had the most detached of all hearts beating in His breast.

# The Whole Heart

*Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart.*

The great horizons of the world make our eyes ache; the level stretches of the heaving ocean, the depths of the heavens when the cold north wind cuts the stars into brilliants and gives them perspective, the vast length of the sky across which the thunder sounds, and whose chasm the lightning spans in its leap, these daze and bewilder us. The horizons of the soul are vaster, and never, perhaps, is the spiritual eye more likely to waver and fail than when it strives to pierce the length and width and breadth of the tremendous words of Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind." Immense indeed is the scope of this "first and greatest commandment!" Sunrise gives us a world-wide horizon; this commandment is a dawn in the moral order, dispelling darkness, clearing up the outlook, and widening the gaze to the infinite depths of the heart, the infinite height of the soul, the infinite width of the mind.

We are commanded to have the whole heart for God. There are no fractions, no small currency in His mart. We do not give Him so much and wait for the change. He takes all our gold. We are commanded to be whole-hearted, not half-hearted, and it is within our power to be so, for God does not command impossibilities. It is to be noted what this command means; other wise our soul will surely be bewildered. "Thou shalt love with thy whole heart/ We are bid to love with all the heart that belongs to us, that comes within the control of our will. The will does not open or shut at its pleasure the lachrymal glands It does not light up the eyes with happiness or darken them with sorrow as it wishes



It can spread a smile on the face, but can not prevent it at times from being no more than muscular. In a word, our feelings are partly rooted in the body, and may be as much beyond our voluntary control as digestion is. The manifestation of feeling may be checked; its presence or absence cannot always be managed as we desire. "With thy whole heart" does not mean with tears or smiles. If we long to have these trimmings of human love, that very longing bathes our heart with tears or wreathes it with laughter, even if our lips are marble and our eyes a sandy desert without an oasis. "With thy whole heart" does not mean feeling which we cannot always have; the phrase does mean willing, an action we can always do.

We love God with the whole heart when we do not give our service to false gods or to God's enemies, when we rate God at the highest price in the universe, and His infinite excellence makes it possible and reasonable always to do that. We love God with the whole heart when word and thought and act, and all our life have but one bent and direction, which is towards Him. The right love of self, of family, of friends, of country, are not fractions taken from God's love; on the contrary, they are the parts which make up that love. If the stream flows towards God, not one of those currents must be diverted from paying its due tribute to the sea. The mother weeping in wild grief for her dead child is loving God with her whole heart. God gave her a mother's heart; He imparted a share of His infinite loveliness to her lost one, and in her very cry and heart-ache is made vocal the void which God left in us to be filled by Himself. The mother would like to, but perhaps cannot, shower on God, as she does on her child, the flood of her tears or the wealth of her smiles, but while she recognizes in the loveliness of her little one but a tiny drop of God's infinite lovableness, she is whole-hearted for her child and for her God.

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The Heart of Christ will show us how to weave the separate and various strands of human love into the vesture of many colors, without a seam," which is to be placed at the feet of God. It would be a mistake to think that the Heart of Jesus did not thrill with the affections which He has implanted in our hearts and wishes us to manifest according to His law. His teaching reveals His Heart. The touching picture of the mother hen gathering her chickens, which described His love for His people; the images of the good shepherd, of the woman's search for the lost coin, of the more than earthly father of the prodigal, which tell of His love for sinners, those, with many other words of Christ, put before us clearly and tenderly the affections of His Heart.

His friendships are even more significant than His words. They are not all the same. They had an appropriateness in their variety. "I know Mine and Mine know Me." Mary, His Mother, and Mary Magdalene, John and Peter, Lazarus and Martha, all found a place in His Heart, and to each He accorded an individual love, suitable and fitting. The knowledge He had of each was varied; the friendship followed suit. The manifestation, too, of these friendships was different. His Heart showed itself in tears at the tomb of Lazarus, flashed forth a melting look for Peter, thrilled in the deepest tenderness in the call of "Mary" to Magdalene, and was lavished on Saint Joseph and His Mother through thirty years of loving subjection.

In spite of, or, rather, because of, all these friendships for those whom He met in life, friendships that are repeated in every soul that turns to Him, the friendship of Christ for His Father was whole-hearted. Indeed, so vigorously, so sternly did He assert the absolute claims of His Father, short-sighted criticism forgets that Christ knew the Fourth Commandment,

forgets that He was lovingly subject to His Mother ten times longer than He worked openly for the world, and that she was in His thoughts as He died. Criticism forgets all this because it forgets that the love of the mother can be and must be united with the love of God. The fire of whole-heartedness purifies and converts into its own rising flames all the fuel that it touches. Listen to the strong language of whole-heartedness: "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father, who is in Heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother." "If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." These are other ways of saying what Christ said in the first commandment, "with thy whole heart." His life, His Heart show us how they are to be understood. God must not have any rivals; to Him all must be directed; and whatever feelings may dictate, if they make willing easy by going with the will or make willing hard by going the other way, the will must, as it can, be whole-hearted in preferring God to any created thing when the soul stands at the parting of the ways. It can, and it must, love the friends God gives, but it must stop short at sin. The heart must be whole-hearted.

Look at the love of the Heart of Jesus. It was whole-hearted in extent, for men: "having loved His own, He loved them unto the end;" for God: "He was obedient to death, even to the death of the Cross." "Unto," "even to," are the badges of wholeheartedness. The love of Christ was whole-hearted in its nature. It went forth to creatures without straying from God. The splendor of the sun may be separated by crystal glass or crystal water into its various component colors; the rainbow hues may again be blended into the whiteness whence they came. The love from the Heart of Christ went forth in all its varied beauty to many hearts on earth, but it stayed not centered and arrested in any one, but, uniting its rays, passed on again to God. God is the alpha and omega,

the beginning and the end of the whole heart, and the Heart of Christ was the most complete of whole hearts.

# **The Fruits of Devotion to the Sacred Heart**

*I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly.*

The Church is richer in many ways for the practice of devotion to the Heart of Christ. To choose thus a part of Christ might seem at first sight to narrow the view, to limit the attention, and so decrease knowledge and power; but it has not been so. The view has been intensified, if restricted; the attention has been focused, and so we know more of Christ and feel more truly the force He exercises. One simple fact is proof. Make a catalogue of the books written on this subject, and you have an index to the riches which have been laid up for the Church by the study and honoring of the Heart of Christ. However, the numbering of books and counting of their pages is a crude way of reckoning our gains. There is a better way, and the heart itself will be the best measure of our increased wealth and income. What does the heart do for the body? It gives color; it gives warmth; it gives life. See the heart in the glowing face; feel it in the warm hand; experience it in the vigorous action of every member of the body. Color, warmth and life have come to us from devotion to the Heart of Christ.

The candle-sticks on our altars were often, especially years ago, hung with dangling pieces of glass, which multiplied and intensified the lights around them. The altar-boy who was fortunate enough to obtain, either by accident or design, one of those glass pendants considered himself wealthy. He went around looking at every thing through his crystal treasure, and he found, to his wonder and delight, that all he saw was edged with brilliant colors. He did not

know it then, but he afterwards understood, that those glass pendants were prisms and broke up the white light of the sun, and so clothed the world for him in the fair vesture of the rainbow. The incident is, perhaps, too trivial to be used as an illustration to a great and consoling truth. Yet Christ, who took the mustard seed to picture the kingdom of Heaven, and the hen and her little ones to portray His solicitude for His people, will not complain of the trivial, if it will teach the truth clearly and convincingly.

Well, devotion to the Heart of Christ has colored His life and our life. When we look at His life through His Heart, we are looking through the glorifying medium of His love. Every word of His lips and every thought of His mind and every act of His gracious hands is clothed in new light. Every truth about Him, all doctrines, are tinged with a new color. As we look on them through devotion to His Heart, we see them clad in the imperial colors of His love. Everything He said or thought, His whole life, in detail and in fullness, is a gift to us, a gift of divine love. "God so loved the world as to give us His only begotten Son." What is the color that has entered into the life of those devoted to His Heart? It is the return of that which beautified His life. Gratitude is the reflection of love. His life has come to us with every event of it bright and fair with love. Devotion to Christ's Heart gives back to Him lives lit up and colored with grateful love. Proof is scarcely needed to show how devotion to the Heart of Christ has imparted warmth. It has enriched our prayers with a new vocabulary. It has made it impossible for insincerity to speak the language of this devotion and remain unchanged. The effort would be too great. Insincerity will be dumb, or, if it speaks, the earnest, glowing words, like so many insistent strokes, will fall on the most indifferent heart and beat it into fervor, or, perhaps, strike out a grain or two of fire to set a soul in flame and enkindle with good purposes an hour or two of life. Give fire an outlet and you give it intensity. A new

language was the outlet of a warm heart which grew warmer with the expression of its devotion.

But the new language was not all. The Heart of Christ sent further warmth into our life, because devotion to it brought the soul within the circle of its influence. When heresy and unbelief bore the hearts of men far away from Him, beyond the sphere of His rule and in rebellion to His law, this devotion came to draw the faithful believers nearer to the light and force from which they received their faith and to which they acknowledged obedience. They would not follow the rebellious on their wanderings through space, chilled and darkened. Christ had been their sun, and, in devoting themselves to His Heart they were setting aside everything that might eclipse the light or lessen the heat. They would not stay on some distant orbit, but would plunge into the very source and center of their day. The Heart of Christ meant His love, and those who practised this devotion were not dwelling on any comparatively cold action or word of His, but reached into the very furnace where His life was kindled, into the love which brought Him to earth and kept Him upon it and nailed Him to the cross.

And what, practically, did this new warmth mean for those who were pledged to the Heart of Christ? As looking at Christ's life through devotion to His Heart meant that it took on a new color in every detail, enriched the mind with new ideas, and so awakened the answer of gratitude, so also it meant the enrichment of the will with new purposes and fervent resolutions, and awakened and made vigorous the practice of reparation. Reparation is sympathy which has found expression in action. If this devotion leaves us with glowing words on our lips and a cold heart within us, then it falls short of its purpose; it is mere sentiment, and not conviction. If the heart is warmed into sympathy and yet finds no outlet except in protestations and professions, it is

mere feeling. In neither case is it devotion. But if the fire of expression hands on its flame to the feeling and enkindles sympathy, and sympathy, in turn, inspires the burning resolve and the burning deed, then there is true devotion and true reparation. Gratitude is the answer devotion makes to the gift from a Heart; reparation is the answer devotion makes to a gift from a wounded Heart. Gratitude has done all when it hands back its life in thanksgiving. Reparation will not be content until the cross is removed from its living pedestal upon Christ's Heart, until the crown of thorns is unclasped from It, until the wound in It is healed beyond the possibility of reopening, until the Heart is as God made It, not as man made It the Heart of Bethlehem, not that of Calvary.

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Some cold winter's night, as a man is carried swiftly home on the electric car, reading his paper in the bright light from the bulbs above his head, he gives very little thought to the cluster of wonders of which he is the center. He is so accustomed to this journey night and morning that any surprise he might have felt has long since disappeared. He reads; he is borne along, and he feels the grateful warmth that keeps out the cold of winter. Suddenly the car is dark; the speed slackens and ceases; the heat gradually grows less. He begins to feel the cold, and he now appreciates the power of that mysterious force of which he was the center. Electricity gave him light and warmth and motion. We may not have appreciated, as we ought, the triple benefit which devotion to the Heart of Christ has brought into our religious lives. If it went out of them, assuredly there would be darkness and want of energy in our souls. We have seen how this devotion gave light and warmth. It remains to be seen how it gives life and motion.



Devotion to the Sacred Heart brought life into the practice of our religion. It brought us below the surface of Christ's life, into the very secret of its existence and to the force that pulsed through its every action. It made us aware of the rich, invigorating life-blood which warms and flushes the pale, cold records of the written Gospel. It made us touch the very life of His life and be thrilled through with an increase of life. How did it accomplish all this? Devotion to the Heart of Christ laid its finger on His pulse and revealed almost to our sight the motives which brought Him to life and death. "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." To focus the life of Christ into the glowing center of a heart, is to bring out, as words could not, the love of Christ for us. The symbol of this devotion is a rubric that rivets the attention and draws it, as no other symbol could, into the very soul of the Incarnation. Devotion to the Heart of Christ, it cannot be too often repeated, is devotion to His love; it is the recognition, the study, and the full, practical acknowledgment of that love. The singling out of Christ's Heart emphasized His love for us and so stirred the pulses of our life.

This devotion emphasized also the love of Christ in its principal and most loving manifestation. The Incarnation took on new life. The world refused to adore Christ, losing sight of His Godhead; this devotion, in protest, singled out a part for adoration. The world was making Christ a man; this devotion made Him, if possible, more so, by insisting on His human nature, while showing Him reverence and honor such as could be paid only to God.

The Eucharist also received an increase of life. If heresy would declare that Christ left us a mere figure, and that the Pasch which He had desired with desire to eat was no more than ceremonial, with less significance than the older pasch which it replaced, then this devotion to Christ's Heart would

protest against so narrow, so cold and so false an interpretation of the words of the Saviour. The Eucharist, therefore, became the home, the dwelling-place of a Heart. It was the center towards which gratitude was directed and from which reparation ward off all attacks. By devotion to the Sacred Heart, Christ was brought more frequently than ever before out of the tabernacle and into the monstrance, out of darkness into the light, out to the hearts of men. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament became numerous and received new interest from the spirit of reparation, which found one of its most touching manifestations in the Holy Hour.

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is a devout practice, whose rise and spread is practically one with the rise and spread of this devotion. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is associated in the minds of the faithful with the same devotion. Communion was received from a new, unselfish motive, a motive which invited frequency and enkindled friendship and added fuel to its flames. They who might not be at the altar at all, or rarely, would often be there when an appeal was made, not to their own advantage, great though that undoubtedly was, but to the advantage of a Friend whose Heart could find relief from the neglect and insults of others in their love and service. So, in every way, new life came to the Eucharist from devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The Passion, too, ceased to be mere history; it became actual and present. The cross and the Heart were brought together and both were helped by their union. The source of the Passion was made strikingly manifest in the way the Heart of our Lord was usually depicted. "He loved me and delivered Himself up for me," said Saint Paul in his magnificent egotism. What Saint Paul united in expression, this devotion unites in representation, His love and His death. His love was the impelling motive of His death, and when the cross was enthroned upon the Heart, when the crown of thorns was wreathed, too, about it, even the eyes

saw what Saint Paul told the faithful. The same picture revealed not only the source of the Passion, but touchingly brought out its poignancy. It made us feel that it was not a man but a Heart that was suffering. The silence, the dignity, the reserve and almost passiveness of Christ during the hours of His Passion might possibly hide from us the keen pain which throbbed beneath that restrained exterior, but in this devotion the eye and mind could not forget the lesson of the Agony. We saw now not merely the tell-tale drops of blood rushing out to reveal to us the pain within, but the whole treasury of His life-blood was laid bare to our gaze, furnishing us with an illustrated commentary on the words, "Greater love than this no man hath, than that he lay down his life for his friend." Those who are devoted to the Heart of Christ could never misunderstand or forget the meaning of those words. They saw the crown transferred from His head to His Heart; they felt that its sharp points had always pierced there; they understood that the Passion was the crucifixion of a Heart, the wounding, the torturing, the death of love itself. In return for the life imparted to Christ's life, this devotion expected life to be imparted to the souls of men. The life of the soul is in faith, in hope, in love, and these virtues all felt the thrilling touch of devotion to the Heart of Christ. True devotion is the enthusiasm of conviction; it is purpose coupled with energy. The conviction of faith, the determination of hope, the energy of love, were all intensified by the new light, the new warmth and new life of devotion to the Heart of Christ. His Heart put a heart into our religious life.

## **Preface to "The Heart of Revelation"**

This is a companion volume to "The Heart of the Gospel" and contains the study of the heart as found in Revelation. The favorable reception accorded to the first series of devotional studies has encouraged the writer to publish these additional traits of the Sacred Heart, suggested by the texts which are here dwelt upon. In the former work the texts were chiefly from the Gospels; in this the Epistles have been mostly appealed to. Several personal sketches have been introduced with a view to add the interest of variety and some more of that human element which seems especially in place in any book treating of the Heart of Christ.

# The Heart of Mary

Mary kept all these words,  
pondering them in her heart.

## The Kept Thoughts of Mary

*Their Source – a Woman's Heart*

“But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.” The glimpse into Mary's soul which these words afford is a precious one. It opens up to our gaze an attitude of mind which was not accidental, but deliberate; not of the moment, but constant. Later on in the same chapter Saint Luke repeats the phrase about Mary. He need not say it again; Mary's habitual attitude of soul is now known to us, and it is not one to surprise us, although it deserves our study. Every mother takes a like attitude of soul towards her child. It is the result of a mother's love. Her thoughts take one direction; her interests have one centre; her affection has one destination. The whole outward tendency of her soul is towards her child. How strong and full that tendency was in Mary's case is clear, when we remember that Jesus was for her not only her Child but her God. In the stream of love which flowed from her heart to His were mingled the currents of every affection with which a woman can be influenced. Mary was the Daughter of the Father; she was the Mother of the Son; she was the Spouse of the Holy Ghost. Think of what that means. It means that her Child and her God exhausted the whole capacity of her love. Toward Him her daughter-heart, her spouse-heart, her mother-heart went forth in its fullest capacity. He touched



every chord to which a woman's affectionate nature can respond, and drew from it the sweetest melody that ever made music in a woman's heart. God had planted within Mary the natural impulse which turns a child to its parent; and that which unites a spouse with her betrothed and also that which centres the love of parent upon its child. God had purified and ennobled and made rich in her these native instincts. The world's history will tell us what human daughters and wives and mothers will do for human parents and spouses and children, Mary's history reveals what the united force of all three must be when directed towards one object. The pure, white flames of every affection that can glow within a woman's heart mingled their heat and light in Mary's and were focussed upon Christ.

### *Their Value - a Mother's Harvest*

It was that triple love burning in Mary's heart and directing its united flames on Jesus, her Son and her God, which made her keep all these words, and made her ponder over them. Jesus was kept and pondered on, because Mary loved every word uttered about Him. Every word uttered by Him came under her loving attention, found a place in the treasury of her thoughts and filled the hours of her life with reveries of prayer. Men of one book are a source of fear to their friends; we hesitate to speak in their presence of their pet book. They know too much about it; they know its lines and letters; they know even its commas; we dread to expose our own ignorance before the superior knowledge of a man of one book. Jesus was Mary's Book. She studied Him and read Him and knew every line and letter of His life; she wrote that life in her heart; it was the best Life of Jesus ever written; it was the fullest gospel ever composed. The best of mother-loves wrote it, on the best leaves ever written upon. "She kept all these words in her heart." We have a beautiful phrase in English that we often use, and I am afraid we do

not notice its beauty. We say of committing something to memory, that “we get it by heart.” If ever that phrase was true in all the full beauty of its meaning, it was so in Mary’s case with regard to Jesus. It was Mary’s life-work to get Jesus by heart, and she did so, “She kept all these words in her heart.”

### *Their Fruits – a Sympathetic Understanding*

What was the effect of Mary’s master-passion upon her? What was the effect on her soul of her kept thoughts? She got Jesus by heart, and what did it mean for her? It meant a complete understanding of Him; a knowledge of His ways of thought and action; a sympathetic appreciation of what He wished and felt. Another Mary and her sister Martha sent a message to Jesus, and it ran thus: “He whom Thou loves is sick.” That was a beautiful prayer. As far as words went, it seemed to ask nothing. They did not say: “Come, or comfort, or cure.” In appearance, therefore, it was no prayer; in reality, however, they could have uttered no more touching prayer. A similar prayer had been uttered before the sisters of Bethany sent their message. Another heart had learned to know the Heart of Jesus long before they began their studies; another heart gave them the model for their request. “Now there was a marriage feast at Cana in Galilee; and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was there; and the wine failing, she said to Him: ‘They have no wine!’” Mary’s prayer was the model. It ran thus: “This newly married couple are our hosts; they have no wine; I say no more.” In both cases there was some delay, for it is God’s way, sometimes, to keep us waiting; but in both cases there was the great miracle. Love read aright the Heart of Jesus.

### *Their Growth – a Song of Praise*

The first effect, then, of Mary's kept thoughts was an intimate knowledge of Jesus and an almost prophetic insight into His soul. Mary's kept thoughts did something more. Kept thoughts are never barren; you can never think the same thought twice, without improving on it. You will see more in it. It will take on new color and new beauty; it will develop along new lines, or, at all events, it will stand out more clearly in the mind. A kept thought is a seed in a fertile soil. It sends out roots; it takes a firmer hold; it grows and branches; it expands into leaves and blooms into the beauty of flowers. A kept thought is not a dead thing; it grows; it is a living thing in a living soul. What was the harvest that came of Mary's sowing? The first words she heard of Jesus she kept, as well as the last words. The first words were the revelation of His coming. She kept them, and as she went in haste over the hills of Judea to her cousin Elizabeth, the thoughts in her heart grew and expanded in the sunshine of the joy of her virginal motherhood. When she arrived at her cousin's house they had grown to maturity, and blossomed forth into the *Magnificat*; that glorious song of praise, of gratitude, of knowledge of God's ways with men, and of the fulfillment of His prophecies and promises to Israel.

### *Their Wealth - the Ennobling of Character*

The miracle of Cana and the *Magnificat* are the evidences of the fruit of Mary's kept thoughts. They are splendid evidences of most glorious fruits, yet they do not exhaust the benefit of Mary's ruling habit. Greater than the knowledge of Jesus, greater than any sublime song, was the ennobling of Mary's character as a result of her soul's master-passion. The angel of the Incarnation disturbed her, and she needed to be calmed and encouraged; the angels of Bethlehem, whose message came to her through the shepherds, left her pondering, while the others wondered. Her great dignity had uplifted her without making her dizzy.



She had still the simplicity of the Nazarean maid, but now it was a royal, a queenly, a divine simplicity. She had been brought into contact, physical, living contact, with her God; but more than that, and affecting her more profoundly, was the intimate, loving contact of her soul with God, because she kept Him in her heart, pondering over Him within her.

### *Their Glory - Motherhood of Soul*

The surrender of Mary to God's will, her glorious profession of humility, obedience and service, expressed in the words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord!" was not simply an offering of herself to God to be His Mother in a physical aspect; it meant the offering of her soul, also, to be His sacred sanctuary, in the higher, grander relations of what we may call spiritual maternity. It was to her, we may believe, Christ alluded when He made answer to an enthusiastic admirer, after one of His sermons: "And it came to pass, as He spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd lifting up her voice, said to Him: 'Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the paps that gave Thee suck.'" Then Christ made answer, admitting the truth of that statement, but asserting a nobler motherhood still and one in which Mary, His own Mother, was without a peer. "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." It was Mary who led the way in that blessedness, by keeping her Son in her heart after His birth had severed the physical bond that united them. "Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart."

### *Their Scope - Full Dominion of the Soul*

Christ in the sanctuary of Mary's soul; Christ kept and pondered on; Christ, the Child of Mary's soul, the Companion of her thoughts, the Treasure of her heart, filled and possessed Mary's life, lifting it to a higher plane. Every

thought, every desire, Mary's hopes and fears, her likes and dislikes, her opinions of things, her judgments and her decisions; every act of mind and will, every movement of her soul was warmed and colored and beautified by Christ, who had become the day-spring of her life, the God that rose and increased to the splendor of the perfect day within her. "Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart."

### *Their Power - the Master-Passion of the Soul*

There is nothing to surprise us in all this, and we are not exaggerating the meaning of the words. Remembering what we have said about Mary's absorption in her Son, whose love was the master-passion of her heart, we cannot state too strongly the effects of that passion. Take the weaker affection of other women; take one single current of the love that flooded Mary's soul; take the faithful love of a daughter or the intense love of a spouse, or the passionate love of a mother singly, and we know what a change it will make in a woman's life. The history of mankind bears witness to the strength of one master-passion. In such cases the whole stream of the soul goes one way; it wears out for itself a channel into which pour all the various currents, all the inclinations, emotions and feelings that stir the heart of mankind. Along that channel these mingled currents rush, gathering speed and force as they roll on and bearing all before them in an impetuous torrent. The dearest interests of man; the most precious objects of human affection; wealth, honor, family pride, home, health, life, and sometimes the very salvation of the soul, are swept like straws before the rush of that tide. Imagine, then, the strong outpouring of love from Mary's heart towards her Son and her God; measure the depths and rush of that stream into which flowed fully every current of affection that can spring up in a woman's heart. You will not be surprised, then, that Mary's whole life should be borne along on that great sea

and swept to the feet of her Son. “Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.”

Mary kept all these words, because she loved her Son and her God, and then the knowledge she collected in this way reacted on her soul, giving her a complete sympathy with her Son, enriching her thoughts, as the Magnificat testifies, and uplifting and ennobling her character. Such was the cause and such the effect of Mary’s kept thoughts.

## **The Kept Thoughts of Men**

### *The Spectrum of Mary’s Soul*

Now it becomes our duty to inquire what thoughts we keep and to examine what their cause is and what their effect is on our souls.

The spectrum of the sun is the spreading out of its light by means of a prism or finely marked plate called a grating. When you see a rainbow, you see the sun’s spectrum, where the rays have been expanded into their various colors by means of the raindrops. If the spectrum of the sun be thrown on a screen instead of on the clouds, as in the case of the rainbow, then in the brilliant succession of colors from violet to red there may be seen dark lines. Those lines are shadows cast by the clouds of iron and silver and gold that float between us and the sun’s brightness. If the sun’s light came unimpeded, there would be no shadows on its spectrum; its tints would merge one into another from red to violet continuously. We should have then what is called a continuous spectrum. If the comparison is not too daring, we may say we have been studying the spectrum of Mary’s soul. Christ is the Light of the world, and the brilliancy of His light passed into her soul unimpeded, without the faintest

obstacle, to cast its shadow on the beautiful colors into which the reflection of Christ is expanded in her soul.

### *The Spectrum of Man's Soul*

What are our kept thoughts? What is the spectrum expanded on our souls? We have not indeed, as Mary had, the living Christ to shed His light upon us; but we have Christ's wish and Christ's law pervading our everyday life and governing all its details. It is impossible that we should go through all those details here, because to do so would be to give a complete history of all our obligations. Let us select one or two duties. There is the duty of good reading, which must be exercised with greater care in our times, when the press reproduces life with the fidelity and completeness of an untouched photograph.

### *The Kept Thoughts of Reading*

If publishers and editors exercise no care over what they put upon their paper, we are not for that reason excused from exercising care over what we put upon our souls. Where do our eyes turn first, where do they stay longest, when we take up a newspaper? Are we seeking for Christ there, treasuring up with love and devotion the slightest manifestation of His presence in the printed page? What articles do we skip over in our magazines? What articles do we gloat over? Is slothfulness, is sinful curiosity, is the base craving for scandal, the unhealthy greed of sensation, keeping the light of Christ out of our souls and leaving there the dark shadows of their own making? Should we like to have the spectrum of the thoughts gathered from our papers, our magazines and our books expanded before men for their inspection? Would there not be too many dark lines and too few bright spots? Would there not be too much world and flesh and Satan, and too little Christ? Are we reading with the eyes of Mary, with a

loving lookout for Christ and with disdain and disgust for anything outside of Him? Have we Mary's delicacy and nobility of soul? Do we shrink from what soils the mind, as instinctively as our hand shrinks from what soils the fingers? Are we as dainty with our souls as we are with our flesh? Do we pick our way through our reading, skirting the evil as guardedly and stepping over unsightliness as promptly as we avoid the mud and filth of our street-crossings? Mary kept the words of Christ, pondering them in her heart. What do we keep and ponder over in our hearts, from our papers and magazines and books?

### *The Kept Thoughts of Charity*

Again, what are our kept thoughts about our neighbors? What are we glad to hear, what are we glad to know, about them? Is it the Christ in them we prefer to see and treasure in our memories, or is it the fallen human nature? What is the spectrum of our charity? Is it continuous or is it sadly and frequently interrupted? Is the pure white light of the Christ in others allowed to stream into our souls unchecked, unblemished, or is it seamed with dark shadows? The fumes of jealousy and of envy, the dense mists of resentment and of prejudice, the black clouds of spite and revenge, float between us and the light, and the spectrum of charity which should be a very vision of beauty and delight, and brilliant with many colors, is rather a band of darkness, with here and there a thin line of light. Would we know what thoughts we keep about our neighbor, then let us ask ourselves what are our conversations like. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. Our talk is a copy of our kept thoughts; our words give a photograph of our souls. Are we rehearsing faults, or scandals, or grievances, or offences, then we may be sure our kept thoughts are not like Mary's; they are not of the Christ in our neighbor. "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it unto

Me.” What is our principle governing what we hear about our neighbor? Do we say: Here is something good about my neighbor; I will keep that? That is the Christ in my neighbor. Here is something evil I have heard, I will not keep that. That is not Christ in my neighbor. “Hast thou heard anything against thy neighbor?” asks the Scriptures. “Let it die within thee, trusting it will not burst thee.” Some are so fragile, so delicately put together, that when they hear anything against their neighbor they do not let it die and be buried within them, but they keep it and tell it as soon as possible, lest the possession of it disintegrate their unstable constitutions.

### *Having Thoughts and Keeping Thoughts*

We saw the effect on Mary of her kept thoughts; what will be the effect on us of the thoughts we keep? You have heard the phrase: “Tell me the company you keep, and I’ll tell you what you are.” We might say in the same way: Tell me the thoughts you keep, and I’ll tell you what your soul is. It is not the thoughts you have, but the thoughts you keep that influence your life; the thoughts about which deliberate choice has been exercised, which you look at and look over and finally decide to retain, not the transient guests, but (the permanent boarders, the ones which we do not pass by, or ignore, or snub; but to whom we accept an introduction, and to whom we are always at home when they send in their cards. When they come, we keep them. Thousands of people may [pass our doors every day; of these, few call, fewer still remain; and but one or two make up our household. So is it in the world of the mind; thousands of thoughts may pass before it every hour; a few may knock, insistently, for admittance; fewer still cross the threshold and receive a welcome, and the home circle of our mind, the household group, is smaller yet. It is our household thoughts, the ever

welcome and long-abiding guests of our souls, that profoundly influence our lives.

### *Kept Thoughts Making Our Characters*

Out of choice comes character and out of character, conduct. The thoughts, therefore, that we fully and freely and deliberately choose go into the substance of our character and through it shape our conduct. It is clear, indeed, that nobility of soul is displayed in shrinking away from mean and low actions. Our friends, we feel, are too noble to stoop to any meanness; they are above that. In like manner a noble soul is above mean thoughts and never stoops to them. Remember, I am speaking of deliberately chosen thoughts, not of the fleeting, passing images that come and go; the bubble foam that flecks for a time the stream of consciousness. Such thoughts we cannot help having, but we can help choosing and keeping them. So then, every ignoble thought and feeling, and emotion that is despised, discloses a noble character; and ennobles it more. Every base image that beckons to the soul to come down from its divine heights and is rejected, forms the discarded debris of the soul's fair architecture that rises to diviner heights. The rejected thoughts are an evidence of character and build it up. We are all partial to our friends, and that partiality blinds us to their failings and makes us keensighted for their virtues. We forgive much in them; we excuse them and defend them; our friendship dominates our talk about them and controls our acts. Now our kept thoughts are the friends of our soul; our household circle, as I have said. We have chosen them out of many, and have entertained them, and we are partial to them. Thinking over them increases our partiality; we open our eyes wider to their attractions and close them tight against their repulsiveness, and so they begin to lord it over our souls. Our kept thoughts become kings and if they are not good

ones, they become tyrants. The will is enslaved. Its motives are swayed to the master-thoughts; its actions obey them. It chooses what the friend and abiding guest of its soul suggests; and as each choice contributes to form a habit and habit goes to form a character, it is clearly seen how the kept thoughts, the friends to whom our souls are so partial, must profoundly influence our lives.

### *Kept Thoughts Making Us Like Mary*

Thus if our passion be to seek and find and choose the Christ in our everyday lives, we may hope to arrive at a faint resemblance of Mary's soul. Our love, of course, is slight and cold, compared with the great fire kindled in her heart. Our search for Christ and our earnestness in hoarding up what we can learn of Him will not equal the keen-eyed eagerness and soul-avarice with which Mary sought out and treasured up every word spoken about her Son and God, and every new fact told of Him. As the cause is not as powerful, the effect will not be so striking; yet if we cannot hope to arrive at the fullness of Mary's knowledge, we assuredly shall know more. Our thoughts will bear fruit, if not a hundred-fold, at least thirty-fold or perhaps sixty-fold. If our hearts do not overflow with the ecstatic gratitude and sublimity of the *Magnificat*, they will not, at all events, be wholly dumb. We cannot hope for the sympathetic insight that Mary had of Jesus. She was His Mother. Yet we shall not be entire strangers to Him. Above all if we learn to keep and ponder on the Christ in what we see and what we hear; if the deliberately chosen friends of our soul are from Him and leading to Him, if we read with pure eyes and if we listen with charitable ears, then we shall feel within our soul the ennobling influence of Christ; we shall be lifted high, indeed, although when we have attained our sublimest nobility, we shall behold the fair character of Mary, our Mother, towering to loftier and diviner heights. She loved more than we, and



where we keep few things, she kept all the words about Jesus, pondering them in her heart. “And all they that heard wondered, at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.”

## **The Kept Thoughts of Christ**

### *His Capacity for Thought by Creation*

The kept thoughts of the Heart of Christ! What were they? “What are the drops of water in the sea?” we might rather ask. “All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea doth not overflow,” says the Preacher, and the capacity of His Heart exceeds that of the ocean. His Heart was made to hold all mankind, its sins and its virtues, its loves and its hates. His Heart with an infinite tenderness and attractiveness drew all things to Itself, all wrongs that they might be made right again, and everything right that it might be rewarded. The infinite justice of God and the infinite malice of sin met in the Heart of Christ. Out of that struggle of justice with sin came our redemption and sanctification. Therefore it was that every soul of man was kept in the Heart of Christ, because every soul was the object of God’s justice and God’s mercy, and within the exceeding great love of Christ’s Heart justice and mercy met and effected the redemption of every man by overcoming sin. The kept thoughts of the Heart of Christ will be known from the purpose for which that Heart was created and the capacity which the Creator gave to it. “All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea doth not overflow.” The ocean of Christ’s Heart is fed by countless streams, yet the infinite circle of Its shores and the infinite reach of Its depths never permit Its capacity to be overtaxed.

### *His Capacity for Thought by Experience*

Great, however, as was the capacity which our Lord had in His Heart when He became man, yet it became greater still as the years of His life went by upon earth. Other springs of knowledge and love were opened up to pour their currents into His Heart. "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace with God and man." Although, as God, our Lord knew all things, and although His human soul, elevated into union with Divinity, must have been adorned with every gift except that which would unfit His human nature for our redemption, yet He was to advance in wisdom by the fresh experience which flooded His soul with every new sight and sound throughout His life. The way in which experience contributes to knowledge may be illustrated by His dealings with Judas. He knew all about the treachery of this unhappy Apostle beforehand and foretold it, but the actual experience of it was something new and more harrowing, when a traitorous greeting fell on his ears and traitorous lips were pressed upon His cheek. In the same way many truths that our Lord already knew came home again to Him through the eye and ear and hand and tongue, tingling His senses with new experiences and thrilling His Heart with fresh love. "Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace with God and man."

### *His Capacity for Thought by Sensitiveness*

There was something else, too, which, besides His Heart's original capacity and the experiences of every day, added to the store of the kept thoughts of Christ, and that was the extreme sensitiveness of His faculties. His senses and His human soul were of a finer texture than ours. His eyes saw deeper and His ear heard better. His touch was more delicate and more responsive. His mind was more recollected. In every respect He had as man faculties superior to ours, not in nature, it is true, but in quality, and He made far better use of them than we do. The records of the Gospel show that

our Lord possessed an extremely delicate and sensitive organism. How often we read of His glance fathoming the thoughts of others! We see Him lose the taste and relish for food, when His zeal had won the soul of the Samaritan woman. We hear of Him distinguishing one touch from another when a great crowd jostled Him. Tears quickly filled His eyes and pity flooded His Heart on many occasions. Finally, the sweat of blood is the supreme evidence of how deeply and how fully He felt the experience of sorrow.

### *His Marvelous Store of Thoughts*

In these and other instances there may be also some exhibition of our Lord's divine and miraculous powers, but it is not too much to take them as evidences of the keenness of His perception and the fine sensibility of His faculties. Nor is it too much to assert that His Heart kept a marvelous store of thoughts by the help of His delicate senses and mind. Everything He saw, from the lily in the field to the lightning flash on high, were new revelations of some truth about God the Father, coming home to His Heart in fresh and vigorous experience. Every word He spoke revealed to His listeners the fruits of this experience in interesting and original teaching. "Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace."

### *His Best Thought - His Mother*

These facts about our Lord's capacity of heart and powers of sense and mind will help us to appreciate the eagerness and fullness with which He treasured up the best of all His kept thoughts, the thoughts about His Mother, Mary. What experience of life can equal that which arises from the love and dependence of mother and son? The mother is the first experience a man has and it is the last to leave him. That is the closest, tenderest, liveliest experience which can thrill a human heart. Imagine then, if you can, the wealth of

thoughts about His Mother in the treasury of the Heart of Jesus. He began living with her life. His Heart first beat from hers. If one of a multitude touched Him and He knew it, what shall be said of the sacred intimacy of the mother and child? Did not virtue go out from that to bless Mary and advance Jesus in wisdom?

### *His Richest Thought - His Mother*

So in a thousand ways for thirty long years the delicate faculties of Jesus, made more keen and delicate by a son's most perfect love, gathered and stored away new and ever better thoughts of Mary. His eyes first opened unto hers in life and to hers they turned when about to close in death. Her voice made the first and sweetest music in His ears. Her arms enfolded Him and held Him to her lips in a mother's first and loving embrace. When the young man in the Gospel ran up and knelt before our Lord with great reverence, asking what he should do to receive life everlasting, "Jesus looking on him, loved him." What, therefore, were the thoughts which filled His Heart when His Mother's love enveloped Him and dominated His whole being? The thoughts that love and youth lay away in the memory are the longest thoughts of one's heart, and we may be quite certain that when perfect Son and perfect Mother grew up together in more than thirty years of the closest ties, the Heart of Jesus and the heart of Mary both were enriched daily with abiding memories.

### *His Holiest Thought - His Mother*

Then, lastly and most of all, there was every reason why Jesus should keep Mary, His Mother, in His Heart. He was sent to the lost sheep of Israel. The Good Shepherd knew all His sheep, even those who were not of His fold, and He had come to gather them all back from their wanderings abroad.

Up and down the length of Palestine He went in search of His lost sheep. He was footsore and weary with the search, but He would not desist. One final effort He would make to draw all to the fold. Ah, that was a rough way our Shepherd traveled and that was a steep height He climbed! The thorns pierced His Head and He could not disentangle them. Feet and hands were held fast, and our Shepherd could travel no further, but His voice could still be heard and His Heart's love could still go forth over the dark ways and the desert wilds of the world and of all time, crying to His lost sheep to come back. In His Heart's vision He could see them all, as well those that were lost forever as those that came home soiled and bedraggled. He would know them; "I know Mine and Mine know Me." But most of all would He know the snow-white lamb of His flock, the one whose fleeces had never been touched with the faintest stain, the one whom He had shepherded from all eternity and kept forever in His fold. In His last, agonizing search for His lost sheep His Heart would find a place in It for His immaculate Mother. She loved her Son and Shepherd and kept Him in her heart, and He loved His Mother and the one whom He saved most perfectly and gave her a special place in His Heart. Mary, His Mother, was the best of the kept thoughts of Jesus.

# **The Sad Heart**

I have great sadness and continual sorrow in my heart.

## **The Burden of Sorrow**

### *The Cry for Consolation*

"I have known great sorrow, real – not imagined, and the year just passed has been bitterly hard – a period, as some one has written, which you would have thought beforehand you could not bear and wonder when you look back how you ever did – a time to test faith and confidence and strength. And through it all outward cheerfulness to be maintained, but not a spark of it under the surface."

### *The Lack of Consolers*

Poor, aching heart! fountainhead of the world's tears, silent sufferer in the world's great hospital, stricken with a deep, gaping wound and inwardly bleeding to death. No one cares; no one knows; no one can know I Like the comedian in the story, you must laugh and make others laugh, and all the while a dear one is dead in your home. You must by assuming cheerful tones and affecting bright glances hang silver trinkets upon a coffin that is guarding death. No one suspects! It would take years with all their days and days with all twenty-four hours to tell the story, and what would avail the telling? The story is one that cannot be told; it must be felt; it must be lived.

### *The True Consoler*

The music and laughter of this world have been registered by modern science upon rigid, unyielding records, and

distant ears may enjoy, as often as they will, the harmony and song and mirth of the world. But how can one rehearse with sympathy the sorrows of men, how can one reproduce to oneself the heart-aches of others? It is utterly impossible, unless there is in existence something which can feel, as deeply and as delicately as you do, all your sorrows, aching heart, and can throb with as dull and persistent a pain as your heart does. Be consoled. Although infinite knowledge and infinite sympathy and infinite love are needed for such a purpose, in God's great goodness we have them all. The Heart of the God-man knows and feels it all. The Heart of Christ is the balm for your aching heart.

### *The Sympathy of Saint Paul*

Perhaps you have felt at times the effect of merely human kindness and have been relieved by slight attentions which were indications, like spars in the changing tides or straws in the shifting winds, of deeper and intenser movements. You forgot thus for a time your suffering. You will appreciate, then, the way Saint Paul felt for his brethren, and from the picture he draws of his heart in sorrow and from its undoubted power to relieve, you will know what powers a more tender, a more sorrowing Heart can have. Think then of these passages of the zealous Apostle. Recall his concern for the Jews whom he longed with a martyr's longing to bring to Christ.

"I speak the truth in Christ; I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost that I have great sadness, and continual sorrow in my heart. For I wished myself to be anathema from Christ for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh."

### *The Sorrow of Saint Paul*

You who suffer so much, will be surely touched at the devotion of one whose heart aches like yours and with an unselfish sorrow. Recall, too, how Saint Paul wrote a letter of reproof once to the Corinthians and then wrote again to console them after his severe reprehension. No doubt, you have had at rare intervals the letters of some friend who could make you forget your troubled heart for a long time. Then you will know that Saint Paul had his heart-aches, as many another has and knew how to console others, too.

“I determined this with myself,” he wrote, “not to come to you again in sorrow. For if I make you sorrowful, who is he then that can make me glad but the same who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this same to you that I may not, when I come, have sorrow upon sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears, not that you should be made sorrowful, but that you might know the charity I have more abundantly towards you.”

Some of these words may not be fully understood without study, but one reading will afford you a glimpse deep down into the heart of Saint Paul, and will give you a view of another aching heart. That knowledge and that sight will help you and prepare you for the Heart of infinite sympathy and infinite sorrow.

### *The Multitude of Sad Hearts*

Oh, aching heart, could you but take voice and speak, an inexpressible wail of anguish would rise and fill the homes of men and overflow into the ways and roll through the valleys and beat in its surging tide against all the hills the world around. Because you are everywhere, aching heart. The children feel you when their parents go or are such that they



were better gone. The father knows you when his hope and pride leaves him in death or disgraces him. The bride or bridegroom suffers with your agony when orange blossoms yield with painful swiftness to the funeral flowers. But most of all, aching heart, your anguish abides within the mother's breast, whether the little one dies in the coming or makes its going sadder because its short stay has made it more lovable, whether the father of her dear ones prove shamefully unworthy or the children themselves are wandering and lost upon sinful ways.

### *The Loneliness of Sad Hearts*

"And the absence of relief and the loneliness of it all," cries the aching heart. "There is no remedy from the whispers of praise or the touch of gold or the mocking laugh of dissipation. There is a slight help in the smile of friendship or murmur of sympathy or hand-clasp of love. These last indeed bring a message to me; they make the sluggish currents of sorrow sway; they stir the stagnant waters with healing movements; they are the angels that visit the pool of Bethsaida. They, however, lessen but do not remove my burden. It is still there when the friends have all gone, when the noises of life are hushed, when the lights are out and night with its terrors comes closing in. Then the pain throbs violently, then the ache burns; it is so intense, and I am alone, alone. No one there through all the dark hours as they pass slowly one after another, no one but I, the aching heart and my horror: my horror, disease; or my horror, temptation; or my horror, remorse; or my horror, ingratitude; or my horror, wrong; or my horror, despair. There I battle till faintness and weariness come upon me, and all the time I am alone, alone."

### **The Burden Lightened**

### *A Sadder Heart Is Near You*

No, aching heart, you are not alone. Faith is not gone and that cries to you that God is in Heaven and all is right with the world. Hope is not gone, and its exultant tones are chanting: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away." And most of all, the greatest of these, charity is not gone. Near you, aching heart, is the Heart of Christ, charity in charity's sweetest form. His Heart ached in silence; His Heart was the only one that ever ached alone. Ten thousand black ingratitude, ten thousand foulest wrongs assailed His Heart. Sin, too, fastened upon It but not His own sin.

### *A Sadder Heart Suffers for You*

All the heart-aches of all mankind and your heart-ache among them, known better than you can know it, felt more keenly than you can feel it, are pressing the sharp points of their thorns forever into His exquisitely sensitive Heart. Does your heart- wound gape wide? Look at the gash in His Heart which shall be open for all eternity, wider and deeper than yours, because containing yours. Is your heart crushed beneath the pressure of grief? Mark the Cross planted deep in His Heart. It was not upon Calvary's rocky ledges that the Cross was first erected, but upon the tender summit of His Heart. Nor could anyone know or possibly suspect the anguish of which His Heart was the centre. His Mother could dimly guess, and she was nearest of all to Him and had a heart that ached with His.

### *A Sadder Heart Suffers Because of You*

Have you not, then, unselfishness enough to forget your scarcely perceptible twinge of pain when you bring it close

to the fathomless, boundless, every way measureless heart-ache of Christ? Especially when you remember that through Him your grief blesses you and blesses others? Especially when you remember that you have helped to sharpen those thorns and to deepen that wound and weight that Cross, which are ever at work crucifying His Heart? Is it not a slight consolation that you may be, if you suffer with Him and for Him, a martyr whose bleeding heart is fruitful for the souls of men? Have you not at least the generosity of the thief? Can you not sincerely say from your little cross: "I indeed justly, for I receive the due reward for my deeds. But this man hath done no evil"?

### *A Sadder Heart Is Lonelier Than You*

And you say you are alone? Indeed, sad heart, you are often so. But have you ever thought of the loneliness of Christ? You would not be lonely, if you could help it; He was lonely, though He could have had His Father and legions of angels. Does the night close in sadly upon you? Think of the bitter night-fall that darkened about the crucified Christ. Jerusalem had never witnessed in earth and sky a more fearful time. Yet within the Heart of Christ were darker shadows still. One by one all had left Him. He would die slowly; He would be tortured to death; He would not blunt any pain by taking it suddenly or with others. He sipped the chalice of His passion. His people left Him. The priests and Herod and Pilate went, and the spiritual and temporal powers went with them. Then His friends went, Judas and Peter dealing Him sad wounds as they departed. Saint John and His Blessed Mother were dismissed, and their kind sympathy which hitherto lightened the burden on His Heart, was now set aside forever. Christ would be solitary. "I have trodden the wine-press alone." So last of all His heavenly Father leaves Him. The Heart of Christ is wrapped in black, impenetrable darkness. It is not despair, or He could not have said the

moment after: "Into Thy hands I commend My spirit"; but it was a desolation, a heart-ache, which would have been despair in any other soul. The Heart of Christ faced Its horror, a divine abandonment, and faced it alone.

### *A Sadder Heart Consoles You*

O sad heart of the world, when you taste again your sorrow, think of the tide of bitterness which rolled in upon the Heart of Christ. "The waters are come in even unto my soul. I stick fast in the mire of the deep, and there is no sure standing. I am come into the depth of the sea and a tempest hath overwhelmed me." "And I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort me, and I found none." His Heart was alone, abandoned upon the wild waste of angry waters; nothing but blackness and death on all sides, and then that saddest of all cries that ever came from a human heart rose from the lonely Heart of Christ: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Christ need not have felt that sorrow, but He willingly did so because He would have you, aching heart, remember that He has made your hidden grief His, that He stood alone that you might never be alone. Whatever others may say or think or do, His Heart knows and His Heart cares, and the years to come, dear heart, must never be like the year just passed.

# **The Happy Heart**

Neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things are prepared for them that love Him.

## **The Joy of Our Life**

### *Happiness – an Essential Impulse*

Happiness is the possession and enjoyment of good. The pursuit of happiness is the occupation of mankind. We do not perform any act except for good; we do not take a step; we do not move a little finger; we do not so much as lift an eyebrow unless we see at the completion of the act the attainment of some good. Take good out of this world, and every man, woman and child would stop still and do nothing until good came back again. If there was no happy harvest, would the farmer work? If there was no salary, would the laborer work? If there was no profit to be gained, would the railroads run, would the factories smoke or the mills keep their wheels revolving? If there was no honor, no glory, no good for God or man, would writers write, or speakers speak, or statesmen govern? If no charity existed or other virtue, would the Church continue or the schools, or would the Sisters and priests sacrifice home and all to take their places at the altar or in the classroom? No, surely! It is good which keeps the world going. From the infant, whose longing for happiness is hardly known except in its weak, helpless cry, to the old, who totter feebly to the grave with the hope of immortality in their dim eyes, all are tending toward happiness. Even the deluded suicide strives blindly but desperately to reach the same goal by hurling himself to death. Happiness is the motive-power of mankind.

### *Happiness – an Impulse Towards God*

Where does this universal, perpetual, invincible tendency come from and what does it mean? There is only one hand which can implant so deeply and so widely in man, and that is the hand of the Creator, and His purpose in setting the currents of our nature toward happiness was to start us toward Himself. The search for happiness is the search for God. "Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest?" The longing for happiness fits wings to the soul of the Psalmist, and when he does fly to be at rest, what does he find? "If I take my wings early in the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy hands lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me." The truly, the only happy heart is the one which rests in the hand of God. It is that final goal of the happy heart which Saint Paul describes in the words of Isaias: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things are prepared for them that love Him."

### *Happiness from Knowledge*

What paradises have entered into the heart of man by the portals of the eye and ear and other senses of man! Nature has spread before his enraptured eyes its fairest scenes. The flowering plants, the falling water, the fields white to the harvest, the mountains lifting from green woods through dark forests to snow-white peaks, the ocean rolling off to the golden glories of the setting sun or breaking in silver spray on the beach, the arching vault of the sky with the bewildering succession of charms by day and by night, in storm and calm, these are the sources of happy thoughts which enter into the heart of man. And what is true of the eye is true of ear, and touch, and smell, and taste. Through every nerve there goes tingling the joy of life, in feel and savor, in sight and fragrance and sound, and all these joyous things gather in the imagination before they reach the heart and are made more attractive and enhanced a hundredfold.

### *Happiness from Lower Good*

Eye and ear and imagination give happiness to the heart by the knowledge they bring, and that knowledge prepares the way for a more thrilling happiness. The charm of what is true goes not to the heart like the charm of what is good. God has given to man the necessary but dangerous gift of the passions. Without food and drink, and the marriage bond, and the home, the human race would cease to exist. To keep the world going, God made happiness attend upon the exercise of bodily appetites. Sin abuses God's gift by perverting God's purpose and making the gratification of passion the end of life. The virtuous use, however, of the passions has helped to make man's heart happy. The swift couriers of the blood are forever bringing messages of joy and registering them in the heart in its increased warmth and activity, as day by day one after another of man's desires finds rest in the lawful enjoyment of its proper good.

### *Happiness from Higher Good*

The happiness of sense and the happiness of passion are intense and overwhelming, and yet there are truer and more lasting joys for the heart of man. The arts and sciences, professional life, successful commerce and skilled craftsmanship, the state and country with their high offices and praises of men, the delights of friendship and interchange of hospitalities, home and father and mother, God's house of prayer and the sweet peace of conscience, are they not all fountain-heads of happiness? Does not every heart thrill at the mere enumeration of them and the memories they excite? Thence flows the steady stream of man's purest and unalloyed joy.

### *Happiness from Highest Good*

But after all that has been said the heart has still greater capacities for happiness. The eye is satisfied with the joy of seeing and longs not for the sweetness of harmony. The eye is made for one act and finds its delight in the successful completion of that act. The heart has larger capacities and a wider horizon. It tends, it is true, toward what it knows upon earth by sense and mind, but it also over-leaps in its flight the sky-line of time and creation, sending its desires to eternity and God. Like the panting bird which struggles convulsively in your hand and beats head, and breast, and wings against your imprisoning fingers in a wild effort to be abroad in the limitless sky, our hearts throb against the barriers of flesh and mortality and know they will find their perfect fruition in Heaven alone. "Thou hast made us for Thyself," says Saint Augustine, "and restless is our heart until it rest in Thee."

## **The Life of Our Joy**

### *Christ Blessing Our Happiness*

Early traditions say that our Lord was never known to smile, and His features have always received in paint and stone a solemn and deep seriousness, bordering upon melancholy. It is hard for the human heart to think that the Heart of Jesus could be happy when it always bore the weight of the Cross and was always overshadowed by the sad hill of Calvary. We cannot forget the dark vision of Isaias who saw our Saviour "despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, struck by God and afflicted." However, of this fact we are certain, whether He felt happiness or not, at least He sympathized with it. There is not a joy which can enter the life of man from his coming into the world until his going out of it, which Jesus did not know and bless. He sanctified motherhood; He gathered the happy children around Him; by miracles He made happy His toiling Apostles, restored



content to a marriage feast, filled countless hearts with consolation of new health and strength, and even opened the grave and woke the dead to life for the sake of sorrowing homes.

### *Christ Glad for Our True Happiness*

But the Heart of Jesus was as sensitive to happiness as our hearts are, indeed more sensitive, because He denied Himself the constant experience of it which we feel or try to feel. His Heart not only sympathized with joy, it throbbed with it, at least in its most unselfish form. He came to save souls, and whenever He knew His mission was successful, His Heart was happy. The three parables, in which He gave to the Pharisees a picture of His merciful Heart, all end with joy at the conversion of the sinner. He was the original of these parables, and as His lost sheep, lost coins and lost children were found, He must have been happy at heart. When His disciples returned to Him rejoicing in the success of their first mission, He is said to have exulted in the Holy Ghost, crying out, "I give thanks to Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth." On one occasion the conversion of a soul filled Him with such joy that He would have none of the food His disciples, offered Him. "I have meat to eat which you know not," He said, and pointed out to them countries white already to the harvest; There was joy for them all, for, as He went on to say, "He that reaps receives wages and gathered fruit into life everlasting that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together." Again, it was that Same joy in the fact that souls were to abide in Him which made Him say at the Last Supper: "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you and your joy may be filled." Finally, it is that same unselfish joy Which makes the Heart of Jesus rejoice daily even now with the angels when we and other prodigals come back to God.

### *Christ Winning Our Happiness*

Yet, despite all that Jesus knew of man's happiness and despite all He made happy, His Heart was usually unhappy. He took a Heart not because it was capable of joy, but because it was sensitive to pain. God gave us hearts that they might be happy; He gave Jesus His Heart that it might be sad. Indeed, the sadness of His Heart is the price of our gladness. Our thirst for infinite truth and infinite good would have been forever unslaked, had not the Heart of Christ shed its Blood •for us. He paid for every joy, and though one ransom would have done for all, He seemed to have wished to pay for every joy its corresponding ransom. The joy of all the senses of Christ suffered that we might have that happiness in our risen bodies. Honor and esteem delight us and will forever do so in Heaven because Christ suffered dishonor and insult. Home and friendship and love of parents, all that gives us the truest content in life and eternity, have drawn their power of consolation from the abandonment, desertion and dereliction of Christ's crucified Heart.

### *Christ Sad for Our Happiness*

What is most touching in the sadness of Christ's Heart is the swiftness and ease with which it might have been removed. Christ enjoyed the vision of His Father all His life. He was in Heaven while still on earth. The full flood-tide of eternal joy might have at any moment inundated His whole body and made His blood-red Heart white as snow. What happened on Thabor could have happened even on the Cross, had He so willed it. The torment of dying by thirst is increased if water is near the lips, but cannot be touched. Such was the torment devised to punish sin in the fables of the old poets. The Passion of Christ in like manner was all the more intense because the horrors of His sufferings and death were a short

distance from paradise, a distance which His generous love refused to lessen in the least. The Heart that might have been in Heaven, had He so willed it, was filled with pain and sorrow and laid open in death by a spear. And why all this? That our hearts might be happy, Saint John, describing the blessed, says: "The lamb which is in the midst of them shall rule them and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life." It is the Lamb of God which shall bring our thirsting hearts to the sources of unending joy where we shall drink and drink, and without satiety long to drink forever. There shall all hearts be happy because of the Heart of Christ. Such is His promise; such the foundation of our hope. "You now, indeed, have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you."

# **The Resolute Heart**

Exhort your hearts and confirm them in every good work and word.

## **Building Character**

### *The Avoidance of Compromise*

Compromise is an indication of weakness of character. The two things which a man of character keeps ever before him are right principles and right actions. Lay the tracks of duty straight and parallel; bring in your motive power by third rail or conducting wire, and your character is completely equipped for work. Mechanical systems of this world may be wrecked by various external forces, but while the soul remains true to its principles and motives, the character will never see a wreck, no matter what disease or disaster may bring grief to the body. Compromise is the interior foe of principles and motives. If it does not at once destroy them, at least it warps them from the straight path of duty or weakens their driving force. Character must stand firm against compromise; a resolute heart must oppose any lowering of principles, any weakening of motives. "Nail the flag to the mast and crowd on all steam," are the standing orders from the resolute heart. Saint Paul puts the same truth in another way when he wrote to the Thessalonians: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions you have learned whether by word or by our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father who hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope in grace, exhort your hearts and confirm them in every good work and word."

### *The Mastery of Right Principles*

The resolute heart needs the consolation and strength of God for which Saint Paul prayed. It is difficult to get right principles, and equally, if not more difficult, to keep right principles. Knowledge, it is said, makes a bloody entrance. Sloth and the difficulties of study and the dryness of learning and many another cause well known to teachers, make the acquisition of knowledge a bloody battle. Such is the case where the student is helped to some extent by curiosity, which is the appetite for knowledge. We are curious, as is well known, to get at truth. What, on the other hand, is the struggle which the soul must make to learn the science of the saints! For that science we have no attraction, no curiosity. In acquiring that science we have other difficulties with the addition of the greatest of all, the downward and evil tendency of our sinful natures. The knowledge of right principles makes surely a bloody entrance. Many a page in the lives of the saints is stained with the blood of self-martyrdom.

### *The Application of Right Principles*

Nor is the battle over, when the lessons are learned. When the resolute heart has fought its way to right principles, refusing to compromise with indifference, ease, vicious tendencies or irksome tasks, then another continuous struggle begins in the application of these right principles to the government of life. It is one thing to admit to oneself that the commandments of God or the counsels of Christ should reign supreme in the soul; and it is another and quite a different thing to apply those principles to the occurrences of every day. "Does this course of action fall under the law?" "How far may I go in that direction without deserting my principles?" "May I consort with this person, utter that word or admit the thought that is now bidding for admission into the accepted friends of my mind?" Every one of these questions suggests a possible place for compromise, and we

all know how often such questions arise. Prejudice and passion assert their claims against principle, and the resolute heart must intervene to keep its principles from swerving toward the “primrose path of dalliance.” “Of course, I admit I must not hate my enemies, but am I to believe that God intended me to love in my heart the one who has acted so meanly and contemptibly towards me?” “Of course, I admit the right principle of self-denial, but this one act of indulgence will not matter, and after all, there must be some letting up occasionally.” These are examples of the arguments that present themselves to us daily when we face life with our right principles.

### *The Claim for Exemptions*

What makes this struggle more difficult is the fact that there are real exceptions to our right principles; there are cases in which the framer of the law did not intend to apply his ruling. Equity sometimes claims an exemption which the letter of the law does not allow. How, then, will His resolute heart hold steadily the balance of justice, giving full value to lawful weights on the scale-pan? We sometimes hear of the full calendars of our courts. There are so many cases that judges and jury cannot possibly hear the evidence and give decision fast enough to relieve the pressure of business. The resolute heart is judge and jury daily for thousands of cases, and in all it must keep true to its right principles and not compromise.

### *The Descent to Lower Motives*

More trouble still for the resolute heart! There is a compromise in good motives as well as in right principles. The motive is the impelling force which moves the will to act. Its importance in the soul arises from the fact that the will is free to act on this or that motive. A good motive

cannot, it is true, excuse or justify a bad act, but a bad motive may vitiate an act otherwise good or an unworthy motive may render it less noble. The Christian, by his name and profession, takes as the motive power of his life the imitation of Christ. Let us say he begins to compromise on his motives. Instead of the love of Christ, he adopts the fear of hell. The motive is good and meritorious, but it is not as noble as before. Suppose he lets go the motives which faith supplies and resorts solely and exclusively to those which reason offers. A profound change has taken place in his character, a change that will leave its record in time and eternity. He now avoids sin and practises virtue because of health or respectability or fashion or reputation. He no longer sees the eye of God looking over the horizon of consciousness into his believing and reverencing soul. He has compromised on his motives; he has narrowed the circle of consciousness and recognizes only the eye of man. He has substituted a policeman for a conscience. He has resigned his right to Heaven and has taken up motives which may be lightly dropped when the club has passed around the corner.

### *The Rise to Higher Motives*

The resolute heart must resist any compromise with motive. It must hold fast to the good, not relaxing and descending lower and lower in the scale of motives, but rather rising from sense to reason and from reason to faith, from earth to Heaven, and then, when in that lofty region, it must soar still higher, leaving behind the selfishness of fear or profit until it cleaves with God's "good hope in grace" to God himself in the unselfishness of perfect love.

## **Testing Character**

### *Strong against Bodily Pain*

Will not the resolute heart flinch in this unending conflict with the spirit of compromise? It might if it forgot what Saint Paul states: "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation." That love is embodied for us in the Heart of Christ, and one manifestation out of many others may be found in the example which is given to the resolute heart by His resolute Heart. Our Lord had His principles and His motives. His life-long principle was God's will; His unceasing motive was love of the Father. Every action of His life was inspired and directed by that love and that will, but it was in the Passion especially that the resoluteness of His character was displayed, and it is there especially the resolute hearts will get their strength. Have we ever tried to understand the strength of His will, to fathom the depth of His resolution? From the moment He came from His prayer of submission in the Garden, uttering the words, "Sleep ye now and take rest. Behold the hour is come," until He himself declared the unequal combat had finally ceased, Jesus, the Son of God, had been pitted in mortal struggle against all the power of the world. Intense pain, physical torture, savage brutality had left His body one huge, writhing wound. Every fibre that responds to the throb of pain had sent its message of agony to His tortured soul. He became the sport of the forces of cruelty. The whole spiritual power of the Jews let the full stream of its pent-up vengeance burst upon Him. The relentless might of Rome, slow to start, rolled down on Him, crushing its victim with the barbarous strength of its soldiery. The populace of Jerusalem, increased to an enormous extent by strangers from beyond the city, turned the blind, unreasoning fury of the mob against Him.

### *Firm Through Mental Anguish*

But bodily pain was the least of His sufferings. His affectionate nature felt the greater agony. His friends forsake



Him; His friends deny Him; His friends betray Him, bartering His life away for a trifle. The people of His adoption, they for whom He had done so much, for whom He was then laying down His life, they rejected and despised Him. The darts of venom, biting sneers, insults sharp and stinging, mockery keener to pierce the soul than any weapon to pierce the body, all these made a target of the sensitive and merciful Shepherd. The lips that had dispelled disease and death were bruised; the eyes that had looked in pity on the unfortunate were blinded with His own Blood; the face ever glowing with mercy and compassion was spit upon and defiled; the hands whose touch had healed, whose power had blessed, were fastened with piercing nails to the rough wood, and the divine Heart, beating with love for all, for betrayers, for persecutors, for murderers, was wounded with the sharp-pointed spear.

### *Persevering with a Man-God's Resolve*

Now, if we turn to the object upon which all this pain and cruelty rained, wonderful is the spectacle we behold. Jesus, our Saviour, ended His prayer in the Garden with a resolution, "O my Father, if this chalice cannot pass away except I drink it, Thy will be done." Our resolutions are lightly taken and lightly broken. We understand not the resolution of a stronger will; we cannot conceive the resolution of a Man-God. But when Jesus going out of His agony said, "Thy will be done," in conforming Himself to that will, His own will became as steel. His body grew calm and majestic. His words were few, dignified and divine. His soul was rooted in unalterable patience. He moved among His enemies to His death, like a man of bronze. The storm of cruelty beat down upon Him, the whirl-wind of fury raged about Him, and the waves of passion came breaking over Him with great might; but the Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner, and

the force of the tempest spent itself upon that rock and retired baffled. The tired body, the strained senses, the wearied mind were clamorous for repose, for solace, but the great will said: "Peace, be quiet," and their cries were hushed but not silenced. The gloom of desolation gathered thick about His soul, it pressed upon it with a heavy weight, but it could not crush the indomitable firmness of will. What, then, was the resolution of Christ, our Saviour? It was a resolution born of infinite love, formed with full knowledge of all that the keeping of it meant, taken freely, gladly, voluntarily. "He was offered because He himself willed it!" It was a resolution to drain the chalice, when to drink of it were enough for God's justice and our redemption. It was not stubbornness nor desperation. There was no blindness in it, but a penetrating knowledge of its consequences; no unreasoning fury, but the patient welcoming of all sorrow. There was no passion in that resolution, except the passion of love, great, intense, God-like love. It was a firm resolution, yet a gentle one; it was staunch, yet without violence; it was instinct with power, yet breathing meekness and affection. It was the resolution of a perfect man; it was the resolution of an all-loving God.

### *Uncompromising in Principle*

From first to last there was no compromise on principles or motives in the resolute Heart of Christ. When He said: "Not My will, but Thine be done," He laid what we might call the foundations of resolution, and the pressure of the Passion did but sink deeper and firmer into His Heart the law of God and the love of God, which formed the principle and the motive of all His life. When the fury of the storm had spent itself, the resolution was found still unshaken. "Into Thy hands I commend My spirit." The Heart that rested on the Father's will when the struggle began, found an eternal

resting-place in the Father's hands when victory finally came to the resolution of Christ.

# The Heart of Joseph

A just man.

## Victorious Justice

### *The Heart Revealed in Motives*

Know a man's motives and you know his heart. The motive is the heart's deliberate choice; it is the reason, fully and freely accepted, of the man's desires and actions. Aspirations and hopes may foreshadow what the heart will be; regrets will tell what the heart would like to have been; desires, consciously and deliberately embraced, are revelations of what the heart is. Such desires are characteristic of a man, because they are completely his and the outcome of his free will. The motive is the beginning and end, starting-point and final goal of the heart's desires. The motive is the heart's treasure, and if you know the heart's treasures, you need search no more. The heart is laid bare before you and you can look into its innermost recesses.



### *The Motives of Many Hearts*

Herod's weak heart is revealed in the motive which led him to murder the Baptist. He would not revoke a rash promise, "because of them that were with him at table." We know the heart of Judas in the motive of his objections to the anointing of Christ, "not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief." The rich young man seemed at first to have a generous, courageous heart, but when he turned

away sorrowful from Christ's call, "for he had great possessions," then it was clear that his heart was not heroic. The reason, the motive, revealed the hearts of the weak and wicked; it reveals, too, the heart of the strong and saintly. The heart of Saint Joseph is introduced to us in the first chapter of the New Testament where he would not publicly expose his spouse "because he was a just man."

### *Justice in Art*

Joseph was the just man with the just heart. But, you will object, has justice a heart? Justice is stern and severe. Justice is sculptured and painted as majestic but rigid and relentless, with scales and sword and blindfolded eyes. Does a heart beat beneath all that coldness and rigor? Justice, you will say, is a determination to give everyone his due; it demands a will to pay what is due, but what need or place has justice for a heart? Mercy, which is as gentle and refreshing as heaven's dew, feels ever the pulsing of a tender heart, but justice whets its knife and wants its full weight and measure, no more, no less. Shall we then insist on the fact that Joseph had a just heart and regulated his life by the motive of justice? Do we not make him forbidding, if we say he acted or refrained from acting "because he was a just man"?

### *Justice in Heart*

The answer to this objection is easy, and we need not fear to speak of Saint Joseph as the just man with the just heart. Justice, we should know, is larger and better than art and artists commonly make it out to be. Justice takes care of crimes and looks to it that the punishment fits them. Justice takes care of debts and sees to it that they are paid. These are such common and unceasing duties of justice that we forget that this virtue has a wider range than crime and

credit. Justice pays all debts wherever and however due, debts of honor, debts of loyalty, debts of kindness. Justice declares that you should get the pleasure due to you as well as the punishment, and be paid with all consideration and fidelity and trust and goodness and tender love just as fully as with all the cash that is to your credit. Justice indeed weighs hell in its scales, but it also weighs Heaven, and it is much happier doing the latter than the former. Justice widens out until it embraces every virtue and measures every good and includes every person. Justice will not allow even mercy to be a defaulter. Surely justice has a heart, and there can be no doubt that the justice of Joseph had a large, tender heart.

### *Justice of Joseph Tested*

When Saint Joseph appears before us in the Gospel, he is exposed to the most trying ordeal which can rack and torture a human soul. He does not, he cannot, doubt of the sanctity and spotless innocence of his virgin spouse, but he was to be tried and God did not see fit at once to reveal to him all the mystery of the Incarnation. Just as some years afterward he was left in sorrow and did not understand when Jesus left him and His mother, so at first he did not know all the facts of Christ's Incarnation. He would not judge wrongly, because he was just. He would not be wanting in the least consideration or in any shade of thoughtful kindness, because he was just. It was a sad search through the night and among strangers when Joseph sought for the lost Jesus. In his heart before that time he had already made another sad search for his loved one, for his peerless bride, who was enshrouded in the gloom of mystery. That Joseph could not or did not for a moment waver in his love and loyalty is absolutely certain, and the reason is because he was a just man. He would measure out to Mary every particle of love and trustful confidence and unswerving loyalty. He

paid her every service and accorded to her the chivalrous fidelity of every thought and surmise. Despite every temptation, he would not admit the faintest breath of the slightest suspicion, because he was a just man, and his heart was the paymaster of his justice. Yet, with all that, we know he must have sorrowed; we know his virtue was tested and tested in the most delicate and most piercing way that a human heart could be tested. Because he was victorious is no sign that the battle was not a bloody one. God permitted the clouds to gather. Joseph could not see the light, did not know when the darkness would lift, but in his gloomiest moment his heart was just and true. He did not abate in the least from the fullness of any virtue. He had faith that the sun would shine and all would be well. He had confidence in Mary. No one else will ever have his justice subjected to so severe a test because never but once in the world's history has the miracle of the virgin motherhood come to pass, never but once has occurred or could occur a set of circumstances involving a severer trial of virtue than Joseph had to meet. We know then that his justice was supreme, because it rose superior to the most exacting test. Truly he was a just man.

### *Justice of Joseph Triumphant*

After this the heart of Joseph found it easy to be just. The sorrows and dangers were great, but his justice was securely enthroned and met all difficulties fearlessly and triumphantly. His heart was happiest in giving his full measure of love and protection and reverence to her whom he took to himself as wife and knew from Heaven to be God's Virgin Mother. His heart was prompt in giving to his earthly superiors all obedience due to them. With just obedience he went up to Bethlehem. With just patience and charity he sought for a suitable shelter for Mary. With just conformity to God's will he accepted the wretchedness of

the stable, when all his endeavors for a better abode were fruitless. Fortitude amidst the toils and perils of exile, patience and conformity again, as before at Bethlehem, in the search at Jerusalem for Jesus lost, fidelity and unceasing kindness and watchful love for many years at Nazareth, the fulfillment of all his offices as husband of Mary, as foster-father of Jesus, as guardian and head of the Holy Family, all these virtues reached their full growth in Joseph. He was just, and his justice had a heart to it. He gave himself in full measure to all obligations and gave himself willingly and gladly. No virtue was dwarfed or stunted; no good desire failed to flower; no act stopped short of its perfect fruitage, because Joseph was a just man.

## **Merciful Justice**

### *Justice Wedded to Mercy*

It is an old question: What will happen when a force which nothing can stop meets a force which nothing can move? It is a similar and equally puzzling question how infinite justice can be allied with infinite mercy. Every work indeed of God's hands is endowed with justice and mercy. It is just because it comes up to the measure of God's wisdom and goodness and to the measure of its own nature and requirements. Every work of God is merciful because it confers good and relieves wretchedness. All His works befit Him; all His works bring a blessing. The Incarnation, however, is the work of God's hands which displays most justice and most mercy. In the Incarnation the infinite malice of sin was compensated for by an infinitely perfect atonement and nothing could be more just than that. In the Incarnation God gave His only Son to be our redemption and nothing could be more merciful than that. The coming of God to earth fulfilled the prophecy of the Psalmist: "Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have



kissed. Truth is sprung out of the earth and justice hath looked down from Heaven." Love alone could bring about so wonderful a union. Where else then could these espousals be consummated, where else could God's justice and God's mercy become one except in the Heart of the Man-God, in the Heart of Jesus? The justice of God did not merely have a heart; it became a heart. His Heart was all justice and all mercy. The merciful Heart was infinitely just and the just Heart was infinitely merciful. The blood of the Man-God was to be the just and abundant ransom for our sins. His love was to shed that blood fully in sacrifice. The union of all these elements of love and sacrifice and the complete shedding of blood is found in the Heart of Christ.

### *Justice Loved by Christ*

Justice is a precious virtue in the Heart of Christ, His desire, His eternal motive, was to effect the redemption of man by satisfying the justice of God. "So it becomes us to fulfil all justice," Christ cries to the Baptist at his baptism. The same thought must have filled His Heart when He was circumcised by Saint Joseph. Because justice was to play so prominent a part in His life may be one reason why He wished to have justice so perfectly exemplified in His foster-father. Joseph helped Jesus in His early years to practise justice. All the trials of His birth and early youth, which He endured under Joseph's guardianship, were imposed upon Christ by the justice of His heavenly Father and were accepted in that spirit. The justice with which Jesus entered His public life in His baptism characterized all His days, and over His dead body as He went out of public life, the centurion cried, "Indeed this was a just Man." Joseph then was a man after Christ's own Heart. Joseph possessed justice and guided the earliest steps of Christ along the ways of justice, and that virtue excited in the Heart of Christ a still warmer and deeper affection for Joseph.

### *Justice Transfigured by Mercy*

The justice of Christ's Heart was colored and transfigured with mercy. It was all justice and yet all mercy. Every drop of His physical Heart is tinged with red and at the same time every drop is throbbing with life. In the same way every drop of His heart-blood is both just and merciful; it is the price of our redemption and passes as coin in the kingdom of God's justice, and is likewise the precious treasure which relieves our misery and is warm with merciful love. His Heart was the Good Samaritan to a stricken world, bearing the soothing oil of mercy and the sharp wine of justice for all its wounds. His Heart is the Good Shepherd, whose just concern will not rest till the lost sheep is home and whose loving mercy makes a happy holiday for the lost one. The Heart of Christ is the heart of the Prodigal's father, not content merely to restore the wanderer to his home and so satisfy the claims of justice, but glad and eager under the promptings of mercy to vest the home-comer in a new robe and to grace his hand with a ring and to start his new life with banquet and music and mirth.

### *Justice Overpaid by Mercy*

Should a creditor have a man owing him a hundred pieces of silver, justice will be satisfied if the debtor pays the hundred pieces, but the creditor will have both justice and mercy, and debtor and creditor alike will be satisfied if the creditor gives his debtor two hundred pieces of silver with which the debt can be paid and the debtor still be rich. This is the example Saint Thomas gives us in his Summa to show how justice and mercy can be reconciled. Apply the example to the Passion of our Lord. We are debtors with an infinite debt, and the just and merciful Heart of Christ pays our infinite debt in His own blood and bestows upon us in addition the wealth of an infinite reward. His blood is the wonderful

treasure by which we can satisfy justice and remove the debt which else had brought us to eternal ruin and is too the selfsame treasure which can gain for us eternal happiness. His justice closed hell; His mercy opened Heaven.

### *Eternal Justice and Mercy*

The mercy of His justice is evident from the fact that His Heart gave lavishly of its treasures. A single drop of blood, a single ache, one only sigh had been enough for a God-Man to redeem a thousand worlds, but His Heart's mercy was not content with what was enough. He opened the fountain of His love and all its contents gushed forth. Nor have they yet ceased to flow. The shedding of His blood still continues; His sacrifice still is offered up, and His Heart every day is pierced and every day gives of Its treasures and every day flows forth upon a guilty world. Nay His mercy endures forever! The Heart which made and loved the just heart of Joseph, which made and will make all hearts just, will continue Its merciful kindness for all ages. The just who attain unto life everlasting, who look upon God face to face forevermore, shall always feel and know that their unsurpassed bliss comes to them through the just and merciful Heart of Him to whom Joseph, the just man, was foster-father.

# The Generous Heart

Every one as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness or of necessity.

## Generosity of Christians

### *'Tis the Full Measure*

Generosity and full harvests go together in the Word of God. "Give" and the corresponding words, "it shall be given you," are called sisters by one of the Fathers of the Church. He spoke in the spirit of the Gospel. The two acts of giving generously and receiving generously go together like sisters. When our Lord first joined these words in bonds of affection, He promised such a rich reward that generosity ought to be the most desired of all virtues. One need not be a farmer to appreciate His promise; if one has ever gone to the markets to make a purchase, then the richness of generosity's reward will be fully appreciated. No such measures are ever found in the close bargains which the greedy marketers of the world are daily driving. "Give," says our Merchant in the commerce of souls, "and it shall be given to you: good measure and pressed down and shaken together and running over shall they give unto your bosom." A generous measure surely, if ever there was one! But mark the appropriateness: generosity is the reward of generosity.

### *'Tis the Bountiful Harvest*

Saint Paul had the same great ideas about generosity and its harvest. When exhorting the Corinthians to make generous contributions to their needy brethren in Jerusalem, he wrote, "He who sows sparingly, shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows in blessings, shall also reap blessings, every one

as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound in you; that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” The reward of generosity is not pictured as attractively as by our Lord, but the description is quite as full, and Saint Paul taxes his powers of expression to tell us of the great reward: “all grace in all sufficiency at all times in all things for all good work.” Saint Paul tries to say by insistently reiterating “all,” what our Lord put before us in that fullest of all measures, never seen except in this description and its fulfillment by Him. Besides describing the reward, Saint Paul describes for us the chief quality of generosity. It is free, spontaneous, smiling, finding its joy in giving. He points out, too, the brimming source of generosity; it lies in the determination of the heart.

### *‘Tis the Well-Spring of Life*

The generous heart! Who is there that does not love generosity? It forms the largest part of the joy of our earliest memories and it blesses our latest ones with its genial presence. Generosity found its first shrine for us in the heart of a mother. In a less intimate and less touching way, it came home to us in the daily, self-sacrificing toil of a father. We rejoiced to see it in the gifts and games and in all the gigantic little things which fill the life of the young and which are often graced by unselfish generosity. Our friends especially were generous. That happy virtue beamed from their eyes, rang in their cheery voice, and thrilled through the warmth of their clasping hands. In the world of business generosity was all the more precious from the fact that it was so rare in its manifestations. In the professions it showed itself to us in ways we would not wish to forget. Our best statesmen and patriots exemplified generous devotedness in toil and suffering and death. Our doctors and

lawyers came generously to us in our hours of distress. Pastors generous in service were responded to by people generous in support and united to form parishes generous in the worship of God. Child and parent, husband and wife, teacher and pupil, are brought together and blessed by the virtue of generosity. Like the wayside spring on a crowded thoroughfare it was ever bubbling forth and singing in its rich flow and glistening in the sunlight, dispensing joy, with no shortening of its stream, no lessening of its flood, no checking of its outward rush, but just giving, giving, giving, to everybody all the time.

### *'Tis the Wealth of All Virtues*

No wonder we have loved generosity, whose name like the magic word in the fairy stories lays bare to our gaze a thousand treasures of the past. Yet generosity has still other glories to its credit. It is the philanthropist of the virtues and endows them all so richly that they yield an ample revenue. The purse-strings of the heart are loosened by generosity, and there is no niggardliness in well-doing. The virtuous acts are not doled out reluctantly or sparingly, but stream out in floods, when generosity is present. Hope is full, and faith is unlimited, and charity is munificent and universal. The inward checks to virtue, selfishness and narrowness and low ideals and timidity are swept away; the checks which have an outward origin yield too, and the generous heart rises above likes and dislikes, above feelings and injuries, above prejudices of family or nation; all these ugly things disappear before the overrunning tide of generosity. They are petty trifles built up by little souls and are levelled into oblivion like children's sand castles before the sea. Generosity will not be withstood. When we think of it, we think of the free breezes of heaven, the wide-spread fall of rain, the great stretches of the ocean, the infinite love of

God which has given in time and shall never cease to give for all eternity.

## **Generosity of Christ**

### *Vast as the Incarnation*

The Incarnation is God's act of generosity. It could not be greater. He gave, not the universe – He had already bestowed upon creatures that pale reflection of Himself; not the soul of man, an image indeed, still merely an image of Himself, but in the Incarnation God's generosity was the greatest it could be; it was infinite. He gave Himself; He could not give more. He gave a Person of the Blessed Trinity; He could not give anything greater. There was, too, a thoroughness in the way He gave Himself. He emptied Himself. The Divinity generously obscured Itself in the infinitely lower shadows of humanity. More yet! This precious treasure was lavished upon us, not as refined gold, massive and exquisitely pure; such a gift would assuredly bewilder us. No, our God became that "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled." The gold became coin and passed into currency among men and made them glad and purchased for them every good thing. God became Jesus, and in His generosity came very close to us. A child on the seashore taught Saint Augustine that God could not be contained by a human mind, no more than a shell would hold the ocean, and yet the Divinity which in the words of Saint Paul emptied Itself, was poured with all its contents into a Heart. There is the generosity of God, infinitely munificent in what He gives; infinitely condescending and accommodating in the way He gives.

### *Broad as the Magi's Star*

Nor was this largess to be stinted in any way by local narrowness or race prejudices. The messengers of Christ's birth called everyone. The angels' voices echoed over the hills of Bethlehem, and the star sent its rays far beyond the hills of Bethlehem. That starlight rose above the mountains of Judea and Palestine, spanning the intervening seas, and dawned upon the world. The human race became the chosen people. It was fitting that such generosity should meet with a generous response. The Magi came with their superb faith and tremendous courage and lavish outpouring of wealth. They gave certain gifts, but, as a preliminary, they offered all they had. Their first act after adoring the new-born King was to spread their treasures wide-open at His feet. The star of Bethlehem had taught its lesson well, and after lighting up the whole world with its rays, it shed perhaps its last light on the gifts of the Magi and lent new lustre to their gold.

### *Full as Christ's Life*

All through His life our Lord inspired the same generosity. He practised the virtue in its highest form and expected it from others. Saint Paul has quoted for us the principle of Christ, and it is the finest thing which could be said of generosity. "I have showed you all things," said Saint Paul at the end of a most touching sermon, "how that so laboring you ought to support the weak and to remember the word of the Lord Jesus, how He said: 'It is a more blessed thing to give rather than to receive.'" The Lord Jesus came to give. Others exist to work for themselves and their charges first of all, and then to work for others. Our Lord came to work for others. The human race was His mother and brother and sister. He gave all and gave generously. Not only in His multiplication of loaves did He have baskets of fragments over and above. In all His generous acts performed everywhere and at all times for all, without exception of nationality or belief, if we knew



the whole story, we should find that the measure of His giving was the measure of the reward promised us, “pressed down, shaken together and flowing over.”

### *Wide as Christ's Arms on Calvary*

The ungenerous are known as grasping and close-fisted, whereas openness is the mark of generosity. The “opened treasures” put the Magi forever among the generous. The valiant woman is generous: “She hath opened her hand to the poor.” The world with all its goods is a mark of the generosity of God. “Thou open Thy hand and fill with blessing every living creature.” The openness is characteristic of our Lord. His hand was ever open in gifts and blessings. “Sell all thou hast and give” was His teaching and practice. His arms were opened wide to welcome the young and innocent as well as the sinful and old. And it is with generosity as with every other virtue; His heart found special, tender ways of teaching it. All His virtues reached their highest in the Passion, and there, too, generosity attained to perfection. “And I,” cried our Lord, “if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.” The open hands and open arms of generosity got a new meaning from the Cross. He put Himself there to show that He wanted to die giving, to be fastened firmly in the action characteristic of generosity.

### *Lavish as the Sun in Openness of Heart*

The sun is the most generous thing in the world of matter. Its fiery nature keeps it always radiating its energy. How long it will continue to do this is a question which puzzles scientists. Like everything generous, the sun has no selfish concern for its own future. It continues to pour out in all directions its life-giving heat and light. Every part of the world receives in abundance; seas of ice and wastes of

desert sand, no less than plains of grain and fruit-bearing orchards. That openness of the sun and the royal largesses of its treasures may help us to realize the generosity of the Heart of Christ. Open hands and open arms were not enough. Generosity had further to go still. Generosity made the open Heart of Christ, and now has arrived at its fullest realization and is perpetuated in a most significant symbol. In the generous, open Heart of Christ is the rich, warm centre of our whole religious life. Thence radiates the fruitful and fostering grace of God, in never diminishing fullness, wasted, like the sunshine upon coldness and hardness or barrenness, or evoking in fruits of repentance or in new growths of holiness a response to that Heart's lavish generosity.

# **The Patient Heart**

The Lord direct your hearts in the patience of Christ!

## **The Trials of Patience**

### *Cooling the Fever of Sadness*

Read the chemical description of different substances and you will find the chemist has accurately determined and is careful to point out what he calls the boiling point of each. That is the point where a liquid dissolves into vapor, where water bubbles into steam. The precise point is not the same in different substances and depends on their nature. What the chemist does for matter, patience does for the soul. Patience determines the boiling point of the heart. Sadness is the element which patience busies itself with, and surely patience has much to do to keep sadness from filling the heart with seething agitation and bubbling turmoil, to keep the worries of life from violently displaying themselves in angry words or deeds. What the Lord said to Isaias of the Jewish people is true of all people: "The whole head is sick and the whole heart is sad." Patience can never rest. It must watch the heart in trials and in pains. It must guard the sensitive feelings against sufferings, against sin and even against the heaviness of self. May Saint Paul's prayer still find answer: "And the Lord direct your hearts in the charity of God and the patience of Christ."

### *Facing the Evils of Life*

That there is a great deal of evil in the world does not call for proof and to the impatient man none seems to be profiting by it except the officials of the weather bureau, the newspapers, some doctors and all the undertakers. The

impatient man believes he could make a much better world than this and run it in much better fashion, and, as far as he himself is concerned, he is probably right. He would satisfy himself at least for a while. His neighbors, however, would pray for the speedy restoration of Divine Providence. The impatient man would first try to improve the weather. He does not care to be seen shaking his fist at a rainstorm, an occupation in which it would be humiliating for him to be photographed and handed down to his children's mantel-pieces. But he has often wished to do violence in his heart to the present arrangement of weather. After bettering the climate, he would likely try his hand at improving his neighbors. "Even Job," he has often said to himself, "had not that one living next door." It is always thus with impatience. Its wrongs are exceptional. The moderns have surpassed all ancient records, and it is his belief that the calamities of Job have been equaled and outdistanced in his regard through the sufferings brought upon him by the small boy across the street. You may have noticed that there is nothing else particularly interesting in the universe for a fly, after it happens to cross the scent of a carrion. You have there and then the whole history of that fly. It stays in that carrion and becomes the ancestor of a long line of flies, who never stray from the old homestead. An impatient man has, like a fly, a very narrow outlook. He confines Divine Providence inside of his front gate, and his permanent occupation is to keep a close, persistent watch upon some small wound that he has festered by his fretting. He would surely make himself and every one else happier, if by patience he would raise the boiling point of his heart.

### *Lasting Through the Stress of Time*

It has been noted that if evil disappeared from the world, many virtues would go with it. Patience would be the first to go. It will not be practised in Heaven. It will win there finally

a well-deserved rest. As long as it remains upon earth, there will be no day off for that toiling virtue. Even if health and climate and our finances are what they should be, they after all do not produce the greatest sadness and do not subject patience to the greatest test. Job's discursive comforters brought his characteristic virtue to a higher degree of excellence than bankruptcy, disease or disaster.

### *Coping with the Character of Others*

People speak of incompatibility of temperament as though it were a modern discovery of the divorce court. It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that two perfectly compatible persons have not yet existed. You may join parts of a machine together because they have been molded to fit. Rough broken stones will settle together and macadamize after a time. But no two characters have been cast in the same mold, and if you eliminate the virtue of patience, there is no steam-roller huge enough to crush two individuals into complete compatibility. The most ardent friendship that has been years in growing, that has been pledged at the altar and blessed by God, will not outlast the honeymoon unless the virtue of patience weld the marriage bond into perpetuity. All this talk about compatible temperaments is neither more nor less than a confession of the absence of patience. Read temper for temperament, and no further proof is needed for the statement. Physical temperament, family temperament, racial and national temperament are so many fine names of impatient temper. At the most, your temperament may be conceded to be your way of getting mad. The artistic temperament has been of tenest quoted and perhaps next to the term, liberty, it has served to cloak the largest number of vices. Excessive sensitiveness and impoliteness and inflexible adherence to one's own ways of talking and acting, and, in general, exaggerated selfishness, are some of the ugly things which parade as manifestations

of the artistic temperament. Patience will cure the worst cases of temperament, restore to the world the fast disappearing virtue of compatibility, cement friendship, keep couples married, harmonize a family and bless home with abiding happiness.

### *Bearing with the Defects of Self*

So far patience with others; it is much harder still to be patient with oneself. Our limitations, our repeated failures, the value which we set upon ourselves turning out to be worthless, our moral bankruptcy, our very impatience itself, all give patience more work to do than do the world or our neighbors. We grow accustomed to pain and sickness, and our power of feeling is mercifully blunted, but some who are patient with a child or a weak limb, are not patient with their soul and its weaknesses. They resignedly face a defect in the body and do not expect a broken bone to heal in a day; but they are vexed at detecting a blemish in the soul and fret themselves sick because it is not removed at once. Self-esteem is responsible for this gnawing spirit of discontent. How annoying to assumed superiority to find itself unable all at once to be superior in its own soul! If a bad habit is not instantly corrected, the proud, impatient soul forgets that habit must be overcome by habit; it rather acts as a Napoleon would, after conquering a whole country and finding himself baffled by one small fortress. His further advance is checked, his reputation is imperilled, and in his fury he brings all his forces to bear upon these impertinent walls until they are heaps of dust. Napoleonic tactics cannot always be practised in the soul. Patience knows that the sick cannot recover all at once, that the child must wait some time for manhood. Patience will not fly into a rage or yield to despair because defects do not promptly disappear. It knows that virtues are acquired only by long and continual

practice. The sadness of disappointed self must not be allowed to set the heart boiling.

## **The Triumphs of Patience**

### *Attaining to Peace*

It will be evident from what has been said that patience is not the virtue of weaklings. The fruit of patience is peace; it might even appear to be mere passivity. It is, however, the passivity which the riveted steel-plates of a boiler have. Beneath their quiet exterior is the immense pressure of steam which does its work and does not wreck, simply because governed and held in submission. Patience is the calmness of strength, keeping a thousand ardent feelings in obedient control. Never were immense passivity and immense activity brought closer together than in “the patience of Christ,” in which Saint Paul prays all our hearts may be directed. Saint John in his Gospel and Apocalypse has made us familiar with the beautiful phrase, “the Lamb of God.” “The Lamb of God”! A perfect picture of patience and an apt symbol of suffering and sacrifice! The lamb is so gentle that a child may stroke its soft, white fleece, and beneath the strong grip of the shearer it opens not its mouth. What could better describe the patience with which Christ faced all evils for us! The ardor of sacrifice throbbed beneath the calmness of the Redeemer. His patience was perfect because it had the most intense sadness to cope with, because it subjected that sadness to the most complete control. Infinite gentleness veiled infinite strength. The passivity of the lamb was joined to the inner activity of a lion. “The Lamb of God” is His patient Heart adequately described for us.

### *Overcoming Personal Repugnance*

Saint John has called Christ the lamb slain from the beginning. Beginning of what? Some answer, eternity; others, time; others, from the beginning of His life. It will be enough to recall here the patience of His Heart in some features of His life. We chafe in contact with others.

Sandpaper, no doubt, if it could think, would blame others for their roughness, and, judging from the side presented to its consciousness, would be convinced of its own perfect lack of friction. We are like sandpaper in our complaints about incompatibility. But think of the infinite incompatibility of Christ. Human nature was infinitely opposed to His divine nature, yet His patient Heart brought them together in His own Person. We admire the patience of a Damien in sacrificing himself to the lepers and suffering his healthy body to be united with foul disease. But the distance between disease and health is not a hair's breadth when compared with the chasm which yawns between Divinity and humanity.

### *Instructing Difficult Scholars*

Our Lord was a teacher all His life. We know what patience is called for in that arduous profession. Day after day ignorance and stubbornness and a host of defects in mind and soul must be made to yield to the touch of patience.

"You can bake an apple," it has been said, "in a few minutes; but it takes months to ripen one." The class-room must patiently conduct the whole process of growth from the seed to the mellow fruit. Never did knowledge call for more patience in its imparting than in the case of Christ. The pupils He had were not of the best, and the lessons He had to give them were strange and hard. Virginity had to be taught to orientals; humility to sons of Abraham; charity to Pharisees; detachment and love of poverty to Jews, who dreamed of a restoration of the riches and power of Solomon. The patience of Christ was equal to the difficult



task. A look was a hard and sufficient punishment in His schoolroom, and He patiently yielded to the stubborn Thomas and finished Peter's education by giving that generous heart an opportunity to return triple love for triple denial.

### *Persisting against Temptations*

Christ had also to be patient with His own soul and here we get a deeper look into the patience of His Heart. He had to cope with the persistent evil of temptation. He permitted the evil spirit to approach Him and make his malicious suggestions and even to lay hands upon His sacred person and bear it where he wished. In that trial His Heart suffered what self must often be patient against, the thoughts, the suggestion, the persistency of tempting sin. In the case of His Heart the presence of evil was all the more hateful because He was so sensitive to its presence. The artistic temperament is not all exaggerated self. Taste may become so refined and delicate as to cause its possessor exquisite torture when brought into contact with anything which grates upon it. Who shall imagine the sensitiveness of Christ's Heart in the presence of sin? What would be the fate of a snowflake in the centre of the sun? How long would its fragile fleeces withstand that monstrous enemy? And yet Christ's Heart was more sensitive to sin than anything we can imagine. Every drop of It shrank in horror from the frightful spectre of sin and fled precipitately through every passage to avoid that evil. "Behold the Lamb of God!" Not one sin alone, but the accumulated iniquity of a}l mankind fell upon that Heart, and a miracle had to sustain It from shrivelling like the spotless snowflake in the fire. Patience framed with Christ's red lips its most beautiful prayer: "Not My will, but Thine be done."

# **The Grateful Heart**

Making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things.

## **The Thanksgiving of Men**

### *Solemn Throughout the Mass*

“Thanks be to God,” “God be praised,” “Praised be Jesus Christ,” these are all words dear to Catholic hearts and familiar to Catholic lips. They are expressions of gratitude. They put into words what every creature of God should feel when he sees the immensity of the debt he owes to his Maker, and his utter helplessness to repay Him except in grateful love. The Church in the Mass, her most solemn and religious service, is loud in her thanks. The three ministers of the High Mass begin the mysteries in the hushed prayers at the foot of the altar; they move slowly and silently to the right for another brief prayer, and then with the same solemn movement they pass back to the centre.

Expectations are aroused; worshipers await in awe, and the first song of the celebrant echoes through the church in the angelic Gloria. In the exultant series of worshiping acts which the celebrant chants, at the very end comes the triumphant cry: “We give thee thanks for thy great glory.” Again before the Mass relapses into the silence of the Canon, in rivalry with the answering choir, the celebrant chants the thanksgiving of the Church and proclaims aloud that it is deserving and just, it is meet and wholesome to give God thanks.

### *Embodied in the Eucharist*

But thanksgiving is not merely prominent in the Mass with music and chant at solemn moments; it is also the earliest and most common name applied to the sacred mysteries. They were called the Eucharist, the thanksgiving. Jesus at the first Mass took bread and “gave thanks,” and in like manner took the chalice and “gave thanks” before the bread and wine were changed into His Body and Blood. The Mass is the sacrifice offered by grateful hearts.

### *Universal and Charming in Saint Paul*

Saint Paul is full of gratitude. Most of his letters begin with the giving of thanks: “I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for you all.” “Thanks be to God” rings out again and again through his letters. His grateful heart struggles to find full expression of itself. No thing, no time, no person must be omitted from the wide circle of Saint Paul’s gratitude. “In all things give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all.” “We also give thanks to God without ceasing.” “All whatsoever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks.” “I desire, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men.” Saint Paul’s gratitude is as charming as it is universal. It was left for him to give us perhaps the most beautiful description of gratitude ever penned: a song of the heart. “Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things.” No wonder the cry, “Thank God,” rises so quickly, so often from Catholic hearts to Catholic lips. Saint Paul tuned our hearts to the music of gratitude, filled our ears with the echoes of gratitude, and the sweetness of that echoing sound has not yet died away and never should.

### *Ever Inadequate in Children*

People forget; they do not think, and so they are not grateful. For years the mother lavishes her heart's love on her child, guarding it from harm, cherishing it with increasing love; and what is the recognition which the mother receives? She feels content; she feels richly rewarded, if her child does but know her and greet her with a smile. Most of the mother's favors and sacrifices are unrewarded, not because the child did not think, but because it could not think. For years it takes freely, eagerly, all that the mother gives and gives not back in return even one look of gratitude. The ungrateful child receives and richly deserves the scorn of all men, and yet that child, if most grateful, can never be grateful enough, because it does not know and cannot know all the favors its parents have bestowed on it.

### *Ever Belated in Pupils*

Pupils are proverbially ungrateful, at least while they are pupils. They do not mark or notice the toil of their teachers. They are unable to appreciate the drudgery of classwork. Instead of gratitude for the patience shown to them, they have rather resentment against their teachers for the pain they feel in being forced to give up their ignorance. Years after, when life has shown them the value of their school lessons, then they think, then they remember, and, feeling in their own lives the pangs of ingratitude from their own charges, they bring their long-delayed gratitude to the graves of their teachers.

### *Lessened by Pride*

Pride, as well as forgetfulness, is an enemy to gratitude. Gratitude is the recognition of a debt; it is bringing the heart to admit that it owes much to another. In grateful hearts such a recognition is cheerful and spontaneous. In proud

hearts there is reluctance to admit any dependence upon another. We think we did most of our bringing up, when we were children; that we did most of our own educating, when we were students. So pride argues in its self-sufficiency. The favors of others are something due to our greatness. In fact, the favor is theirs, not ours. Do not thousands clamor to be introduced at court for the privilege of paying their respects to royalty? We, proud hearts, extend to the world the esteemed favor of kneeling before us and offering us the fruits of their industry, their sweetest flowers. The melody of gratitude is rarely heard in the proud heart. It was a satirist who stated that a race had been discovered so savage that they knew no words for gratitude, and in their language instead of "Thank you," they said, "Do it again."

Many of the children of God, many of the pupils schooled by His Son, because of their inadvertence, their ignorance, their forgetfulness, or their pride, are not "singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things."

## **The Thanksgiving or Christ**

### *Begun in the Incarnation*

The Heart of Jesus is the best model of a grateful heart and is the most deserving object of worship for grateful hearts. If the hearts of mankind are ungrateful, because they do not know what is done for them, or do not remember, or are too proud to acknowledge anything has been done for them, those hearts are utterly unlike the Heart of Christ. Christ, our Lord, knew and remembered and humbly acknowledged the infinite favors which God had bestowed upon His Heart. The Incarnation is the most stupendous act of condescension, the most marvelous favor which could be granted to the world. It was God himself, stooping from the infinite heights

of His divinity down to the uttermost depths of our humanity. Great as was the favor of the Incarnation to us, it was greater to the human nature of Christ. That nature was lifted to a sublime height. It could not be more highly favored than it was. Mary was honored by the angels, was called full of grace, was the object of favor from the blessed Trinity; but close as Mary was to the Incarnation, she was infinitely distant from it when compared with the humanity of Christ. If Mary, then, was highly favored – and no creature was more highly favored – how great must be the favor bestowed upon the humanity of Christ, upon the Heart of Christ. The mother is not the person of her child; she has not united to her the nature of her child; but God is the person of Christ's human nature and is united to it so closely as to make one being out of that wonderful union. From the Incarnation sprang a host of other favors and blessings upon the human nature of Christ and so upon His Heart, a most prominent and an essential part of His nature.

### *Perfect in Manifestation*

How grateful, then, is the Heart of Christ! Gratitude is the echo of a favor; it is the vibrating of the heart-strings in harmony with kindness shown. When the chords of two musical instruments are strung to the same pitch, if one is struck, the other, even though distant, will take up the sound and give off the same note. Where could the melody of gratitude make truer or better music than in the Heart of Christ, sensitive to the slightest favors because so keenly conscious of them, thrilling in response to the least kindnesses because so fair in appreciating them, breaking into the sweetest harmony because so humble and ready to recognize God's goodness? If we understood and remembered perfectly and acknowledged perfectly all that was done for us, we should be perfectly grateful. The Heart of Christ, then, had the most perfect gratitude of any

created heart because to infinite favors It made a perfect response; to God whose Heart It was, It offered most perfect gratitude in word and act and thought and in the fullest outpouring of thankful love.

### *Frequent and Full in Expression*

We know how grateful Christ's Heart was. In the most solemn moments of His life the thanks of Christ welled from His grateful Heart. Standing on the mountain in the presence of the five thousand men, besides the vast number of women and children, Christ gave thanks. Standing before the tomb of Lazarus, when about to perform the great miracle of raising from the dead, He again gave thanks, and in that final marvel of the Blessed Sacrament, once again He gave thanks. It was then He instituted the Eucharist, the Sacrament and service of thanksgiving; and when our hard hearts find themselves unable by dint of repeated efforts to cast off even a spark of gratitude at Mass and Communion, we may look back with some consolation to the Heart of Christ, whose tenderness and thoughtfulness and humility elicited that first, great act of thanksgiving for the gift of the altar.

### *Heartfelt in Lessons for Us*

The Heart of Christ was gratitude itself, and the Heart of Christ is the best source whence to draw grateful feelings for our ungrateful hearts. It is the love in a gift which makes it a favor. The kiss of Judas is like a smile on the face of death, covering corruption with the appearance of life. Could our eyes look into the hearts of our benefactors, we should know how great ought to be the measure of our gratitude. We might not respond because our hearts were cold and callous, but we should know what heartiness and sincerity should ring out in our "Thank you." Now, in the Heart of Christ, we

have the evidence of the love with which He came to us, we have the measure to which our hearts should try to reach. The Incarnation came as a favor to us and the love behind that favor is the Heart of Jesus. There is the “grace of God, our Saviour”; there is “the goodness and kindness of God, our Saviour,” which, in the words of Saint Paul, “hath appeared to all men.” In devotion to the Sacred Heart we look upon the Incarnation as the manifestation of love in its most winning form, and as the Passion was the completion and fruit of the Incarnation, it too has left its impress and seal upon that bleeding Heart.

### *Supreme in Christ's Passion*

No doubt, Christ accepted and endured His Passion from countless virtuous motives. It was an act of obedience, of mercy, of fortitude, of justice, of patience, of meekness, of humility, of every virtue which found a home in the soul of our Lord; and it would be hard to say in that wonderful and attractive rivalry which virtue towered supreme. Saint Paul singled out on several occasions the virtue of charity. “He loved me and delivered Himself up for me.” Surely, we may look then on the Passion as the loving response made by Christ to the favor of the Incarnation. But what is gratitude if it is not love’s reply to favors given, if it is not a heart reechoing the love of another? The Passion, therefore, was an act of thanksgiving for the Incarnation. Christ received life that He might surrender it in death; His Heart was filled with blood that He might pour out upon us Its divine contents in gratitude. Surely that Heart should make our hearts sing with grateful love, giving thanks to God for all things. Should the sun which warms us drop suddenly through space like a wandering comet, in a very short time we should be cold in death. Imagine the sun withdrawn until we were on the verge of freezing, and then imagine it to leap back into the sky again and flood the earth with



warmth and life. What a cry of thankfulness would arise from a rescued world! There would be one great hymn of gratitude singing in the hearts and breaking from the lips of mankind. Christ is our sun of justice; and His Heart is that sun's central fire. The souls of the human race were doomed to death, when suddenly the life and light of His Heart's love dawned upon us, "the Orient from on high visited us to enlighten them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the way of peace." And where is the world's gratitude to the Heart of Christ?

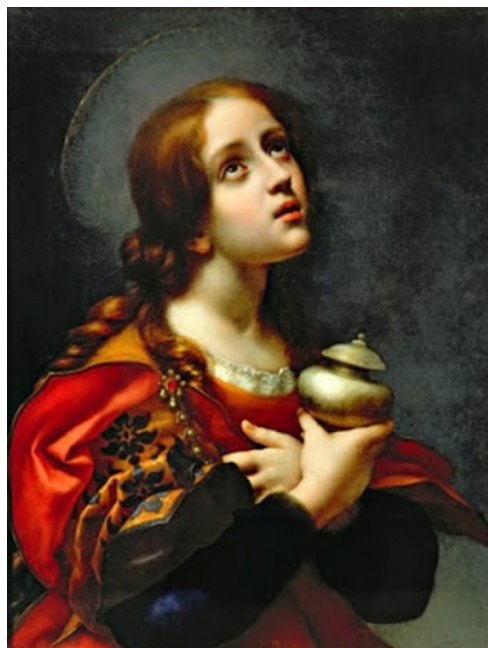
# The Heart of Magdalene

She hath loved much.

## The Tender Heart of Repentance

### *Sad over the Veiled Past*

Mary of Magdala, will you let us draw in outline the picture we find of you in the holy records of your Lord's life? We shall not lift the veil, as some have tried to do, and give those earlier days which the Gospel has set forth in vague, yet sufficiently serious, words. You had been a sinner, you would admit, a great sinner, and, in humble sorrow at your sad straying away but in contented peace at your blessed return, you would own to the title given to you by the Evangelists. Judas was the one who betrayed the Master; John was the one whom Jesus loved; you were the one from whom "He had cast seven devils." You had fallen low; that the perfect number, "seven," tells us, but you had risen high, that we know from the perfect casting out by His power. Not in the dark days then before He came, but in those after days, bright with repentance and love and loyal service, shall we read your life and see in it the working of your scarred but tender heart.



### *Silent in Service*

We have not many words of yours set down for us. Rather were you silent. On that wonderful day in your life when you knew "He sat at meat in the Pharisee's house," when you

made full answer to His call and came, you came in silence and you worked in silence. Your sighs and sobs may have been heard, but you tried, we doubt not, to suppress even them for His sake and to avoid others noting you when they should be, as you were, wholly taken up with Him. On that wonderful day you found your place at His feet and you took it in silence, and as you were on that day, so you were ever afterward – in silence, at His feet. He would speak, and you would listen. You had no thoughts, no words, no looks for aught else. You would not look at the past or think of it. When the deer has wandered over barren fields and worked its way through dense underbrush and after hours and hours of struggle comes suddenly upon the murmur and freshness of running waters, who would look for it to turn aside from that flowing feast and not rather plunge and hold fast in the cool currents dry lips and parched tongue? Such you were, panting after the fountain of waters. So your soul panted after God. The words of the Psalmist would come to you: “My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God? My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy God?” You were silent because your soul was beside the running waters. You had left sin and had eyes for the sinless One alone. You had abandoned the unholy affection of men and abided forevermore in the presence of the love of your God.

### *Generous in Sacrifice*

You were not simply silent about the past, but you broke with it utterly, with all its memories, with all its methods. Your new life was to be spent at the feet of Christ and there you brought everything and in generous, final sacrifice cast all before Him. Your precious ointment was poured upon His feet, and the alabaster box was broken that no part of the sacrifice might be held back. Tears filled your eyes and shed

their more precious fragrance in glistening streams upon the lavished ointment. Upon the same altar you made offering of still fairer gifts; there were gently laid the loosened tresses, and there your lips touched in the oblation of true love.

### *Abject in Consecration*

We doubt not that you put your whole life beneath His feet, and as afterwards thousands with the cry of "Hosanna" spread their garments before Him that He might tread upon them, so you cast your heart beneath His feet, should He desire to crush that bruised thing, which indeed He never would do. Yet you were willing it should be thus. You would reconsecrate your life to Him, and the heart with all its love, and the body with all the beauty God gave it, that before this drew men away from God by their brilliancy, would now attract men to God. Their holocaust made a more resplendent glory in the sight of earth and Heaven. The instruments of sin became the instruments of reparation and sanctity.

### *Purified by Trials*

You met in your new life what all meet who "will live godly in Christ Jesus." Your silence was to be tested and your sacrifice made pure by opposition. You were misjudged and misunderstood. It was not strange the Pharisee should have thought you still a sinner and wondered that Christ, the new Prophet, allowed you near him. Stranger it was that the Apostles should oppose you in what had become your practice, anointing the Lord, as you did in life and after death, but they were led astray by Judas, He by greed and they by short-sighted charity objected to this honor to Christ. Today we have so-called friends of the poor who rob them of Christ, a possession of the soul for life and eternity, for a few cents' worth of "bodily pleasure. You did more for

Christ's poor by securing to them belief in Christ's Godhead and leading them to seek from Him consolation of soul than you would do by any passing solace for the body in food or drink or clothing. Again you were tried and now not by Pharisee or Apostle, but by your own sister. We do not know well her motives. No doubt she was overworked and tired. She had all the responsibility of the hostess, the anxious care of the Guest. She did not know that Christ was content with simpler service. She spoke in vexation, and we hope your saintly sister had no jealous feelings, but only a desire for your assistance that time, when you took your usual station at His feet.

### *Zealous, Though Gentle*

Silence, sacrifice and suffering, they stand out in your Gospel life. Are we wrong in thinking that they show to us the tenderness of your heart? If you yielded to the pressure of evil where all was easy, you were more prompt, more responsive in yielding to the attractiveness of good, where it was hard to offer all and in return to meet with opposition, and still the while to be quiet and silent at Christ's feet. Nor must we think your tenderness was all passive. When there was need, you showed yourself to be a true sister of Martha. You forced your way to the foot of the Cross and on the day Christ, your Lord, rose from the dead, we hardly know you for the silent, patient one we saw before. That morning you had no rest at all, and every one heard your repeated, anxious cry, "They have taken my Lord away, and I know not where they have laid Him." Courage and fearless "zeal go with tenderness of heart. We have read of a woman facing and slaying a venomous snake in order to defend her pupils, and then swooning away when she had succeeded. In a similar way your tenderness responded to the gentle address, "Mary," and as you had been active before, now again you slipped to your former place at Christ's feet, clinging to

them, as His words to you show us, just as you did in the Pharisee's house long before.

## **The Tender Heart of Mercy**

### *Forgetting All Quilt*

Did we address Mary of Magdala in that fashion, we can very well imagine what answer she would make. "Speak not of anything I have done, I, the sinner to whom my Lord was good enough to reach down His hand, to lift up from the soiling earth. Speak not of any good thing in me or in my heart. There is no good thing there of my fashioning. What I made of my heart, my Lord in His kindness bids me now remember no longer because through His mercy the number of my transgressions which rivalled the multitudinous flakes of the snow, and the hue of my sins which was as scarlet to His pure eyes, both are no more. The hideous, hectic rout has been swallowed up more utterly than the Egyptians of old in the waters of the Red Sea.

### *Condescending to the Fallen*

"No, speak not of any tenderness of mine which has more shame to it than it has honor, but speak rather of His tenderness, think of and dwell upon the delicate, quivering sensitiveness of His Heart of love. If I were silent at His feet, it was out of abashed wonder at His condescension. That He regarded me at all, that He permitted me that station, was so great a favor that I was left breathless and helpless. Words would be vain, and what words should my soiled lips form and my sinful voice utter? Silence befitted me, but mark His tenderness. He had stooped down to my bruised life, which was like a reed trodden upon, and raised it aloft and gave to it wholeness again. The breath of His love played upon the soot and black ashes of my scorched life, as

so much burning flax, and amid grimy smoke found the smouldering spark and made it leap into newer, purer flames.

### *Eloquent for the Silent*

“Nor did His tenderness stop there. When I was silent, He spoke for me. Such strange, such large, such divine words! His own goodness He described when He said, ‘Many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much/ His own graciousness He spoke of when He made mention of what He Himself had given me, ‘Mary hath chosen the best part.’ And as if all this were not enough for the sinner in whose heart seven devils had taken up their abode, He in His divine mercy deigned to tell His Apostles: ‘She hath wrought a good work unto Me. Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also what she hath done, shall be told for a memory of her.’ What need had I for aught, unless it were for deeper, profounder silence, when His tender Heart gave utterance to such speech?

### *Gracious for Trifling Sacrifices*

“Then you speak of my sacrifices. Sacrifices of what? A bruised teed, a smoking flax, a wasted life? It was no sacrifice to give; it was a favor that He should accept. Compare not the clean, precious vesture of His enthusiastic followers to what I threw before Him. That was the fitting place for my soiled heart, not for their bright robes. If He found it better wayfaring on the stained tissues of my life than on the rough, black roads of mankind, it was again not anything from me, but everything from His kindness. My life and all the gifts He gave me and that I abused, were honored in being permitted to serve Him and wait upon Him and be consecrated to Him. And did you not mark His tenderness here too? Have you not known a tender mother

in her great love for her child to be so good as to be interested, to grow enthusiastic, to be gladly appreciative when he laid before her a bit of glass or some other such worthless trifle he had picked up in the dust of the wayside? The mother was gracious; the child was overjoyed. Such was the tenderness of my Lord's Heart to me. He noted, He dwelt upon each and all of my trifles and was pleased. 'She with tears hath washed My feet and with her hair hath wiped them. She hath not ceased to kiss My feet. She with ointment hath anointed My feet/ Surely He who remembers every little act and numbers them and makes so much of them; surely He has a Heart more tender than a mother's.

### *Champion of the Sinner*

"My sufferings are mentioned. Ah, I suffered not from the opposition of others, from rash judgments or misunderstandings. Others never treated me as harshly as I deserved, and what if they had? The severest attacks were nothing to me now. I was as one over whom had swept a violent storm but who was then at peace. The storm of the new opposition came not into my soul. It seemed to me far away. The lightning flash glowed faintly and the thunder was only a gentle murmur. Around me was the refreshed air and the clear sky and the bright warmth of a sun, new-born out of a tempest. I was in the sunlight and exhilaration of His presence, and, resting there, the violence of the storm did not ruffle the calm or break in upon the hush of my peace. Most of all I minded not opposition because He became my defender. How could I ever have been thought worthy of that boon from Him? I was not worthy, but out of the overflowing tenderness of His Heart He flew to my defence as He guarded promptly, eagerly, all those whom He gathered under His wings. The death of my brother drew tears from His eyes. He was in a moment to call him back to life, but that immediate joy did not restrain His tears. No heart of



man could have or dream of such tenderness. As with my  
griefs, so with all that threatened me He acted as defender.  
Neither could any defence be better or fuller or more  
thoughtful and tender. Finally, in His last battle, He fought  
for me and He fought for you and for us all with His Heart.  
He put His Heart between us and our sins, although their  
sight was enough to cause Its tenderness to shrink in terror  
and drive Its blood out upon His body. He put His Heart upon  
the Cross and laid It open to the hard, sharp spear. "He went  
down to His death in defence of us all, and sacrifice and  
suffering is little, nay, no return for his tender kindness."

# The Contented Heart

Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts.

## Our Worry

### *Happiness and Content*

Contentment is not the same as happiness. Job was not happy, but he was content, "The Lord hath given; the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" The sick, the mourning are not happy, and yet are often content. Hospitals and sanitariums have many hearts beating contentedly within stricken and tortured bodies. Happiness passes; content abides. Content is the smile on the face of patience; it is the temperance of desires. Discontent is fretfulness and rawness of heart and soreness of soul and the riot of desire. In content we say, "I have not everything I want, but I am determined not to be disappointed in what I have." Saint Ignatius of Loyola spent many years of his life building up what he named the Company of Jesus. To see that established was his life's ambition and his heart's desire. If his newly recruited religious army were to be destroyed, it would take fifteen minutes, he thought, to be reconciled to that disaster. After that he would be content, although, of course, he would not be happy over the fact and not satisfied at the condition of affairs.

### *The Brood of Unsatisfied Desires*

A modern instance may illustrate the absence of content. A father wished very much to make his little son happy on his birthday. He thought in his great kindness that it would be good to allow the boy to choose his own gift. A fatal decision! The boy went with his father to a toy-store and was

about to choose the first thing which met his eyes when unhappily something else was detected, possessing qualities the first object lacked. There was no more content in the boy's heart and there could not be. Had the father been a millionaire, he could never buy a present to suit. The fairyland of a toy-store with all its colors and shapes and sounds had dazzled the boy's eyes, passed into his childish imagination and awakened a multitude of desires within him. He went away grasping one present, but discontentedly thinking of a thousand other possibilities. Saint Ignatius would be content, though he lost what he loved better than life; the boy was discontented, though he possessed the gift of his choice. The desires of a millionaire joined to the income of a day-laborer will never fail to produce the fretful heart of discontent. Lazarus had more content with his crumbs than Dives at his banquets, and Herod on the throne was troubled while his intended victims exiled themselves into Egypt, sadly but contentedly.

### *The False Healing of Pride*

Would you like, worried dweller of this world, to have a contented heart? Have you not looked upon life with a child's eyes, disappointed, dissatisfied, with one toy, a little wealth, a little fame, a little fashion, and with a thousand dreams of other brighter toys, dreams never to be realized but always vexing and tormenting your heart? Have you any of that unalterable content the saints had? Could you face with equanimity the undoing of your life's work, the loss of all you hold most dear? Would fifteen minutes reconcile you or would even fifteen years reconcile you to the taking away of even one little source of slight happiness? If you answer that you have not a contented heart, then I say, do not look for it in pride. Pride hides disappointment; it does not heal it. The world will suppose you are contented, your friends will think so, and you would fain persuade yourself that you are

contented because you vehemently and persistently tell your heart that it is and must be satisfied. A coat of mail will not cure a weak heart, and contentment is no surface thing like the imperturbable, unyielding expression of pride. Neither does contentment, like pride, harden or make callous. Contentment goes deep below the surface and permeates and fills the heart and leaves it tender throughout.

### *The Illusory Distraction of Sin*

Look not for contentment in dissipation. Dissipation postpones the inevitable. The swiftest ride must come to an end; the most humorous and dazzling play has its last fall of the curtain, and the banquet hall must after all be deserted, and you shall have to tread it alone where "lights are fled and garlands dead." No, you cannot pluck contentment out of the mad whirl of pleasure. The contented heart forgets much and should forget much, but when its sorrows are submerged, they go down to fathomless depths and rise not again. Dissipation disgorges in sadder condition whatever goes down into its turbulent waters and strews the shore with wreckage and debris. The truly contented heart can remember and still be at rest.

### *The Imperfect Remedy of Paganism*

Seek not contentment where the pagans of old sought it, in stoicism or in fatalism. The stoics did not admit the evil; the fatalists made themselves callous to it. The stoics said, "Pain, poverty, disaster, death, should not disturb you, because they are not real evils." The fatalists said, "These things should not disturb you, because they cannot be helped." The former cried, "Don't worry: what's the sense?"; the latter cried, "Don't worry: what's the use?" Both systems contained elements of good and stoicism made nobler men,

but both succeeded in making a contented heart in one way only, by the simple process of turning it into marble.

### *The Perfect Remedy in Christ*

Where, then, will you find the contented heart? Let Saint Paul answer you: "Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts." The meaning of the word which our English version renders "rejoice" is in reality "arbitrate or decide," and Saint Paul advocates making the peace of Christ the arbitrator and judge in our hearts, the settler of all disputes, "He Himself is our peace." Christianity accepts the estimate put on virtue by the stoics; it accepts the truth of the fatalists that evil must be, but Christianity introduces a Divine Person to both classes of pagans. God, a living and loving Being, permits the evil of the world and out of it draws good in time and will draw eternal good when time is no more. The will of God, the Providence of God, are the principles which give true, permanent content to the heart. "God's will be done," is the cry on Christian lips, and the echo of that cry in the heart is contentment.

## **Our Peace**

### *God's Will In Christ's Birth*

If true content means a heart-beat in unison with God's will, then Christ, our Lord, had that true content in a preeminent degree. Contentment might be called peace which has found its way down into the heart and sheds its daylight there, A casual glance at the life of Christ will show that peace ever filled His Heart. The Angel of the Annunciation bade Mary fear not. His precursor, Saint John the Baptist, was to precede the Orient from on high and bring all to true content. When Zachary's prophecy of his son rose to its exultant height, it closed with that crowning duty of the

precursor: "To direct our feet into the path of peace." The angels of Bethlehem made peace in the Heavens the burden of the song they sang over the stable where Christ was born, and down in the manger His Heart beat with peace and content. In everything, in the four sides of His crib, in the four walls of His first home, in the swaddling clothes, in the gloom, the sordidness, the dishonor, He saw the will of His Father. All this was the very sign and evidence, designed by Heaven to prove He was the Saviour. "This shall be a sign to you." Christ lived the prayer of the "Our Father" before He taught it to His Apostles, and His Heart beat in harmony with His Father's will from first to last. Here at Bethlehem if one had the ears of faith to hear its throbbing, in every throb there would be contentment and perfect accord with Divine Providence. No one had a better will than the new-born Christ; no one had a juster claim to the contentment that was promised that night to men of good will. When the angels sang in Heaven, "Peace on earth to men of good will," the Heart of the Babe of Bethlehem reechoed in the manger, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

### *God's Will in Christ's Life*

Contentment possessed the Heart of Christ when the Father's business made Him leave Mary and Joseph in the Temple. Contentment swayed His Heart for the thirty years that, in obedience to God's will, He was subject to them in Nazareth, In sadness, but in peaceful content, He went out to His public life, humbling Himself to John's baptism because so it became Him to fulfill all justice, burying Himself in the desert under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. When He cried to the angry waves, "Peace; be still!" He gave a proof of His power to give greater content to the human heart in the many occasions in which He said to the suffering, "Go in peace and be thou whole," and proof too of His sway over the stormier waters of the sinful hearts which

He reconciled to the will of the Father by pardoning their sins: "Go now and sin no more."

### *God's Will before Christ's Passion*

In peace and contentment He entered upon the closing scenes of His life. On Palm Sunday, "when He was now coming near the descent of Mount Olivet, the whole multitude of His disciples began with joy to praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works they had seen, saying, 'Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord; peace in Heaven, glory on high.'" But as His followers echoed the angels' song of Christmas, He wept over the city of Jerusalem because it had not the contentment of being true to God's will. "If thou also hadst known and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thy eyes." It was to procure for us the things that are to our peace, that Christ was now going into Jerusalem. He had taught His disciples to make the prayer for peace their first wish on entering a house: "Peace be to this house," and now, as he was leaving them He made that peace His last wish: "My peace I leave you; my peace I give you."

### *God's Will During Christ's Passion*

With the same consecration of His Heart to God's will and therefore with the same contented Heart, Christ went to His agony and death. The bitterness of the chalice, the sting of the lash, the sharpness of the thorns, the keenness of nail and spear, the poignancy of separation, the torment of thirst, the maddening anguish of insult and mockery, the horror of Divine abandonment, all fell upon His Heart and rent it, but robbed it not of content. "Father," He could still say, "into Thy hands I commend My spirit." To pursue the story farther is unnecessary. "Peace be to you," was ever on

the lips of Christ in His risen life, and from Him the wish passed to His disciples, who went forth, “preaching peace by Jesus Christ.” Saint Paul took up the prayer and began, continued and ended his Epistles with the prayer for peace, and so down the centuries the prayer that the peace of Christ be with us, that contentment be in our hearts, has been taken up and uttered with fervor and then passed on to a new generation. “Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts,” is the prayer of time and the pleasure of eternity.

### *God's Will the Foundation of Peace*

The peace of Christ will bring true content of heart. It is deep and lasting, not founded on forgetfulness or dissipation, not seen in the self-blindness of fatalists or in the flinty hardness of the stoics. The peace of Christ is based upon a true principle, not on whims or false theories; it rests upon the firm, unchanging foundation of God's will. Christ's Heart will make contented hearts, if they will live and act as He did. Pain, sorrow, poverty, disgrace and other misfortunes are not able to destroy the content of a heart which models itself on Christ. Neither can sin, the only evil, an evil which attacks the very principle of content by opposing, not admitting, God's will – neither can sin destroy content, if we remember that Christ's Heart lived and died to rid the world of sin and has “reconciled us in peace.”

### *Resignation to God's Will not Stagnation*

The peace of Christ does not mean passivity. Resignation to God's will does not spell stagnation. Growth, improvement, is the will and law of God. We see that law in every living cell, in every member of the body, every faculty of the mind, every ambition of the soul. God gave capacities and wanted them to be realized. “The Kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the earth and the seed should spring



and grow up – first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come.” So body, mind and soul are to be fully developed in God’s way and produce a full harvest. Resignation does not mean acquiescence in stunted growth, but it means contentment after best efforts for improvement. Christ’s Heart is the example of true content and is the guarantee to us that even evil has no power to destroy our content or injure the principle upon which it is based. The human mind cannot imagine a greater evil than the murder of a God-Man, and yet out of that greatest of all evils God’s will has drawn the greatest of all goods. The Heart of Christ crucified and content is the brimming source of the world’s contentment.

# The Hopeful Heart

Hope confounds not because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts.

## Lethargy of Soul

*From the Absence of Hope*

“There is no hope.” If those four words were wholly true, the energy of man would disappear and a universal palsy would benumb the world. Commerce and education, arts and professions and trades, health and sickness, growth and decay, civilization and science and religion, all need hope and practise hope. In the region of the north the rivers become solid blocks of ice, creeping slowly to the sea; in the absence of hope the currents of life would not move, however sluggishly; they would be fixed in the hard and fast immobility of coldness and death. Hope melts away lethargy and makes the energy of life run free and smooth. When evil threatens us, we begin to fear for our hope; when evil is unavoidable, we cry out: “There is no hope.” Wherever evil most abounds, there that sad cry is oftenest heard, “There is no hope.”

*From the Evils of Pain*

The hospital hears the cry. In that sad spot the pains of the world are gathered: the pain which is the price of man’s entrance into life, the pain which lurks like an assassin along all the ways of man’s life, the pain whose pangs torture man out of life. Is there a moment in all the twenty-four hours in which some anguished lips do not whisper sadly: “There is no hope”? The last draught of medicine has been taken; the last incision of the surgeon’s knife has been made; and with

the last clasp of the hand and last touch of the lips and look of the eye, hope is submerged by the dark incoming tide of evil.

### *From the Evils of Sin*

The soul of man, too, as well as his anguished body, must struggle lest the cry of “no hope” ring despairingly out of its gloomy depths. For the soul sin is the great evil which grapples in a death-struggle with man’s hope: personal sin and the sins of others. Dishonesty and immorality and intemperance and hatred of a fellow-man, these are the evils which sweep in upon the soul, become another, blacker self, closer to one than his shadow and near to one as life itself. To pluck out those habits which have fastened upon the soul so firmly and have grown in so deeply, will be like plucking out and tearing away some organ of the body, parting currents of blood, rending the quivering flesh and severing the countless fibres of sensitive life. Is not the soul, contending with evil habits, tempted to moan: “There is no hope”?

### *From the Multiplication of Evils*

The crimes of others also press upon the tortured soul. Never was man’s callous brutality to man more widely and more (quickly known than today. The telegraph and the printing-press multiply the crime or disaster almost instantaneously, and what was an evil to one or a few becomes an evil to all. A shudder encircling the globe quivers through mankind, and every heart registers the evil and participates in the grief just as the delicate needles of scientific instruments record every vibration of the earth from some far off earthquake.

### *From Injustice Between Men*

Never were evils of others more grossly exaggerated or painted in blacker colors than they are today. Civilization seems to be breaking up into two camps, employers and employed. The intimate personal relations which used to exist, when manufacture was conducted on a smaller scale, have now in many cases disappeared. Men work for stockholders whom they know not and see not, who do not seem much concerned for them and for whom they themselves are not much concerned. Agitators take advantage of this separation to breed discontent. On the one hand, people who hold property forget their obligations and the rights of others. They are like a man, as has been said, who owns an untamed tiger and walks along the street with it, held in check by a shoestring. On the other hand, the employed forget their duties and listen to false teaching and to incentives to violence. The injustices of governments and tyrannical majorities who trample on the rights of minorities are added to other injustices. All this evil tends to drive people to despair. The soul moans: "There is no hope."

*From the Many Ways of Death*

Then there is ever the gloom of death overshadowing mankind. Life is a continual struggle to keep out of the graveyard. Physicians may multiply and remedies become innumerable, but the patients outnumber them both. When science stamps out one disease, other new ones take its place. Shipwrecks or train-wrecks, fire or flood, wars, pestilence or famine, these and a million other causes which cannot be put under a class, are avenues leading to the same burying-ground. We all know that our doom is sealed; we are all condemned to death. The missile of our death may have a slow velocity or a swift one; it may be travelling through a long barrel or a short one, but the trigger has already been pulled, the bullet is on its way and in a short time it will do its deadly work. "There is no hope."

## *The Mass of Evil and False Remedies*

Gather together the anguish of mothers and the cries of weak infants, the moans and screams of the hospitals, the groans of remorse, the curses and imprecations upon crime and injustice, the jobbings and laments over the dead, and listen to the evil of the world as it rises and falls like the roar of a great storm over the dark waters of a shoreless ocean. That is the cry which hope must hush; that is the evil which hope must hush; that is the evil which hope must compensate for, if it cannot remove. Hope must strike the drug from the hands of those who seek the despair of stupor and must stay the hand of the suicide who blindly runs to the despair of the tomb. Hope must not let remorse drive the victims of habit to the despair of dissipation or the victims of injustice to the despair of violence. Hope must dispel lethargy and recall animation and activity; it must wipe away tears and light up saddened eyes; it must still sobbing agony and bring peace where it cannot inspire joy. All who say: "There is no hope," must hear the cheerful and confident answer always, "There is hope."

## **Energy of Soul**

### *Goodness Incarnate in Christ's Heart*

Hope has a gigantic task to perform, and we may be sure it will not disappoint those who have it. This is the testimony of Saint Paul, who from the intensity of evil argues to hope. "We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation works patience, and patience trial, and trial hope, and hope confounds not because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts." The hopeful heart is so superior to pain and other evil that it even glories in tribulation. The reason is not far to seek. "Because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts." Hope holds fast to the goodness of God. As one

of the theological virtues, hope clings to God Himself; it fastens itself upon God's certain promises. Saint Paul states the truth in the words just quoted: the charity, that is, the love of God, is the sure foundation of hope. Saint Paul is right. The Heart of Christ, which is God's love made flesh, should fill the hearts of mankind with the flood of hope. Nothing else can do so better. The Heart of Christ is all goodness; the Heart of Christ has conquered all evil and bears in Itself the remedy to all evil and the answer to all of the world's despair. The hopeful heart then will reach up to God through the Heart of Christ. Heaven and God are the goal of Christian hope, and the distance has been shortened by the Incarnation and the end seems far nearer, now that God's love comes to us in so attractive and winning a form, revealed to us in the wounded Heart of the Man-God.

### *His Wounds - Assuaging of Pain*

So, wounded heart, you who suffer pain in the world's hospitals, you must never let those cold words cross your lips, "There is no hope." Before you is the Heart of the risen Christ. He invites you to bring your hand and put it into His side and to believe and hope. His Heart has not permitted Its wounds to close that you might not despair. His death has made your pain rich in merit. Suffering was a penalty for sin; Christ's death and resurrection has made suffering a source of grace, a promise of greater happiness. Christ suffered to enter into His glory; you suffer to enter into your glory. So when you are in pain, you are travelling towards the reward of hope, and when earth has exhausted its powers of relieving your pain, you have almost reached the end of your journey. Before you is the risen Saviour with every scar radiant, with His wounded Heart resplendent as the sun. Tribulation has worked glory for Him and it will for you. Your pain is the pledge and guarantee of your hope. Turn not, then, away from this fountain of hope to the despair of

stupefaction. Drugs may relieve you, they should not be allowed to destroy you. The saints in their trials, the martyrs in their torments, exulted in their pains because they fixed their eyes upon that Heart which proved to them that wounds and anguish are the distinguishing and consoling badges of God's friends, just as they have become the glory of Christ's Heart.

### *His Rising - Destroyer of Sin*

And you, sinful heart, wherever you may be, do not you either despair. What if sin has brought you to the death of the soul; what if habit seems to have sealed you in the dark grave by the weight of a tombstone; one touch of the risen Saviour and the stone exceeding great was! rolled away on the first of Easter. Remember, too, that the earliest fruits of the resurrection were lavished on sinners. Peter and Thomas and Magdalene, she upon whom lay the heavy weight of habit, out of whom Christ cast seven devils, these were the ones Christ opened His Heart to. So do you, tortured heart, who are tempted to despair, look up and you will see Christ before you, with the cry of peace on His lips, extending to you the invitation to approach to His wounds. Those wounds were made for your sins, and every sight and thought of His wounded Heart must be an increase of hope for you. Christ has conquered sin and the world and the flesh and the devil, and His Heart remains forever as the splendid memorial of that victory. The return to innocence will not be harder under that standard. Through that avenue of love and mercy and infinite forgiveness which lies open before you, make your way, despairing heart; through the wounds of the Heart of Christ you will find hope.

### *His Suffering - Relief of Injustice*

And you, worried heart, who feel the injustices of the world, do not have recourse to violence, which is really a kind of despair. Do not think that injustice is to be met by injustice. Christ, you know, was a victim of the crudest injustice, but He did not take up the sword or call upon His Father for legions of angels. No, He prayed for His persecutors, He died for them and made His crucifixion, not their condemnation but their conversion, should they so desire it. Today also the hopefulness of love and not the despair of violence must unite the warring factions of the world. The rich do not possess all rights and no duties; the poor have not all duties and no rights. Love must make wealth and power merciful and service faithful. The owner of an income from stocks and bonds must not look upon them as a well whose source goes through rock and earth, he cares not whither if only its supply fail not. The fountain of his wealth may pierce through flesh and bone and tap the stream of life-blood. Wealth, therefore, cannot look with unconcern upon the Heart of Christ, if wealth knows its income is pressing a cross into any human heart or tightening a crown of thorns about that heart or draining away man's life through gaping wounds. To the poor likewise Christ's wounded Heart teaches love, and love will be the answer to those who appeal to violence. On Calvary the world's violence met Heaven's love. They clashed in the Heart of Christ, where violence was defeated and love triumphed, and peace was made between man and God. The Heart of Christ will therefore be the best bond of union and the solid assurance of hope among men and will keep you patient and hopeful, worried heart.

### *His Death – Eternal Life*

Lastly, frightened heart, do not despair because death is all around you, under foot and overhead. The nearer death comes, the more you must hope. Death is not the end of all. Christ's Heart died; Christ's Heart began to beat again in



life. The heart within your breast will cease to throb; its substance will pass into dust, but the vision of the risen Heart of Christ is your most certain assurance that the dust will once more take shape and warmth and life and begin again to throb within you. Hope, too, when your friends are stricken down in death before you. Think not that you are going farther and farther away from those whose hearts were filled with love for you and are now in dust. Hope has other thoughts for you than that. You are not ten, twenty or thirty years farther from your own, but all those years nearer to them. "We do not grieve as those who have no hope," Saint Paul teaches us. The Heart of Christ reminds us that all the hearts now dust will throb again with renewed life.

### *The Greatest Evil the Greatest Good*

There is every reason for hope in the Heart of Christ, wounded, crowned with thorns, surmounted with a cross and yet transfigured with the splendor of Heaven. Then fix your eyes upon the Heart of Christ and cease not to hope. Christ entered into what seemed to human eyes a most hopeless conflict, one man against the greatest civil power and the strongest, not to say most fanatic, religious power then in the world. A weak, human frame contending against an accumulation of physical tortures; an innocent soul withstanding the immense mass of the world's iniquity! What could be more hopeless? Yet the Heart of Christ is before you to testify to the wonderful, exalting outcome of that conflict. From pain came joy; from torture, bliss; from weakness, strength; from disgrace, resplendent glory; from sin, sanctification; from death, eternal life; from the slaying of God, the saving of all mankind. Most astounding paradox that ever was or could be! The Heart that met pain, sin and death on Calvary is before you, hearts of the world, painless, sinless, deathless; "always living to make intercession for us"; and could there be anything more hopeful than that?

# The Zealous Heart

You have bitter zeal and there be contentions in

## **Quintessence of Concentrated Meanness**

### *Jealousy - Fallen Angel*

There is a volume of sermons in the significant fact that zealous and jealous were once the same word. Strange and yet true! Jealousy is a fallen angel of the choir of zeal. How did jealousy corrupt its noble nature and fall so low? Zeal is truly a heavenly thing, the over-flowing of charity. Fill your soul to the brim with love of God, and you are good and holy; let the precious contents pour out upon the souls of others, and you are zealous. Zeal always has its eyes on foreign missions. It is restless at the sight of evil; it feels the pressure of its own earnestness; it moves abroad and sets to work to remove and utterly root out every wrong. Until all sin ceases, until all souls are saved and occupying the highest possible places in Heaven, zeal will not be content.

### *Jealousy - Degraded Rivalry*

Where, then, is the kinship between “zealous” and “jealous”? It is in this. Zeal has a narrower sense than the one just described. It means rivalry and emulation. In fact, while jealousy was growing worse, zeal seems to have been growing better. Zeal after a time left out of sight the rival, whom it was trying to equal in the getting of good, and strove simply to get more and more good for others. When, on the other hand, rivalry became more intense and more selfish, then jealousy came into the world. The zealous rival is sad that he is inferior to another and strives to make up the deficiency; the jealous rival is sad that another is

superior and would be glad to see him robbed of that advantage. Zealous rivalry fills up the valleys to the level of the mountains; jealous rivalry tears the mountains down to the level of the valleys. There is not much difference in statement between getting better than another and getting the better of another, but there is a world of difference in fact, and it is represented by the difference between a zealous heart and a jealous heart.

### *Jealousy - Described by Saint James*

Saint James in his Epistle describes the jealous hearts for us, using of them the terms, "bitter zeal" and "envying," which are expressed by the same words in the original text. "You have bitter zeal and there be contentions in your hearts: glory not and be not liars against the truth; for this is not wisdom, descending from above; but earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and contention is, there is inconstancy and every evil work."

### *Jealousy - Described by a Chemist*

"Jealousy is the quintessence of concentrated meanness." That is the definition given to college students one Sunday morning twenty-five years ago by a professor who for that same number of years had taught sciences. He was a chemist, and he knew the full meaning of all these words. To get a concentrated solution, he had often to keep a liquid simmering long over a hot fire. To produce eight ounces of attar of roses, he knew, would take three thousand times that weight, or one ton of rose-petals. So he concluded that a vast amount of meanness was needed first of all in a highly condensed form, and then he would have to go to an infinite deal of care and trouble to pluck out the heart of that solution and isolate for inspection, jealousy, the meanness of that meanness. Was the professor

exaggerating? He did not seem to be to his listeners, and he will not seem to be to anyone who has studied the evil nature and marked the ruinous effects of jealousy.

### *Jealousy - Cancer of Human Love*

Certain poisonous growths are like plants and will not thrive except on a proper soil. Cancer, for example, grows on flesh, preferably human flesh. Jealousy has its proper soil; it fastens upon friendship as its suitable place. It is the cancer of love. Its favorite abode is the home and the family. The first appearance of it in creation came very early. Was it not envy or jealousy which helped bring about the fall of the angels? Another creature of God, they were told, was to be better than they. The created nature of Christ was to be united with Divinity, and we may well believe that jealousy formed part of the malice which gave birth to the first rebellion and the first sin. "God created man incorruptible, and to the image of His own likeness He made him," says the Book of Wisdom. "But, by the envy of the devil, death came into the world." Does Wisdom refer to Eve's sin or Cain's sin? If jealousy is not one of the sources of all sin, certain it is that it was the cause of the first murder. The favor of Heaven excited the jealousy of Cain.

### *Jealousy - Wrecker of Homes*

Jealousy has lived up to the fatal promises of its beginning. Joseph and his brothers, Saul and David, are further proofs, if needed, of the murderous issue of jealous thoughts. Remake the history of the world, leaving out jealousy, and behold the happiness of friends and families, and listen to the harmony of the loving home. Brother will live in friendship with brother, and sister with sister, each happy that the other is blessed. The favor of Heaven will not make them "exceedingly angry" or make their countenance fall as in the

case of Cain. They will not strive to kill those whom they cannot perhaps equal. The favor of parents will not bring to their lips the piteous whine of the elder brother of the Prodigal. "I never had singing and dancing for me. Thou hast never given me a kid to make merry, but thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."

### *Jealousy - Dyspepsia of Souls*

The contemptible meanness of jealousy is shown clearly enough by the number of homes it has wrecked. It is still more evident from an inspection of the way of acting and the motives of jealousy. Jealousy is essentially a creature of darkness. It is a kill-joy. Its evil eye, and black, malicious glances are often mentioned in Scripture. It makes its possessors unhappy. They waste away. Jealousy "hath a lean and hungry look." It is the true dog in the manger, snarling, snapping at all comers. No dog ever wanted hay, but this cur is so mean that, if it cannot have the hay, it will let no one else have it. Revelation and common sense, history and experience unite in condemning such sour selfishness, such dyspepsia of the soul. Modern science in the person of one of its professors was right in asserting that jealousy is the quintessence of concentrated meanness.

### **Quintessence of Concentrated Generosity**

#### *Zeal Aflame in Christ*

That the Heart of Christ was afire with zeal needs no proof. It is depicted to us as radiating heat and flame. If zeal is the excess of love, then what is the measure of excess where the infinite love of God is put into a human heart? The coldest, hardest iron when subjected to heat will glow to whiteness, radiate its energy, dazzle the eyes with its splendor, and when struck, burst into a shower of sparks. What then shall

we say of the tender, sensitive Heart of Christ when caught up into union with the Person of God and made the instrument of His love? Its zeal will be as nearly infinite as can be. "I came to send fire upon earth, and what would I but that it be kindled?" Every particle of zeal found in the Apostles, the missionaries, the teachers, the Saints of the Church, are but sparks cast from that great conflagration.

### *Zeal Eager to Win All*

That the Heart of Christ could have no jealousy is equally clear. The sun is not jealous of the struggling beams of a candle millions of miles away. A thought of jealousy would come as near to that Heart as a drop of water would to the centre of the sun. Its nobility, its Divinity, kept the base pettiness of jealousy at an infinite distance. If the jealousy of the fallen angels met that Heart on first being revealed to creatures, then that is proof of the eternal enmity between jealousy and the Heart of Christ. It was the mission, too, of that Heart to reconcile a world to God, to win back to Him all the love that should be His, and that means all the love there is. God wants it all. He calls Himself in the Old Testament a jealous God. Because, just as zealous was used in a bad sense, so jealous is used in a good sense. God is jealous lest the smallest part of His children's love should go from Him, and the Heart of Christ is zealous to sweep all hearts as fuel into the holocaust of love that should go up from creatures to their Creator,

### *Zeal - a Foe to Jealousy*

Every consideration, then, kept the Heart of Christ from jealousy and filled it with more and more zeal. His experience in life would serve to increase His antagonism to jealousy. He would find jealous feelings growing up among His Apostles and almost breaking into open enmity when a

fond mother urged the claims of her ambitious sons to a special place in His kingdom. It was necessary for Him to become more and more popular, to gain followers and advance in power. It was unavoidable then, that He should excite jealousy in mean spirits. Not all were like Saint John the Baptist. There, surely, was a large and noble soul, far above the narrowness and pettiness of jealousy. He welcomed the new Leader; he pointed Him out to his best disciples, checked those followers of his who were envious of Christ, and went into solitary obscurity and to death with the profession of that splendid principle, which is the cure of all jealousy: "This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." Other leaders, however, were not like John. They did not view the growing power of Christ as the generous heart of the Baptist did. "What do we?" they cried; "for this Man doth many miracles." "From that day, therefore, they devised to put Him to death." Their motives were no secret. Pilate was weak, but he was shrewd enough to know that jealousy was the cause of their enmity to Christ. "He knew that for envy they had delivered Him." Jealousy then committed its greatest crime, bringing about the crucifixion of the Son of God.

### *Zeal - a Sacrifice unto Death*

The Heart of Christ was zealous to convert and heal these jealous hearts if so it could be. Once His zeal flamed forth and, making a whip, He drove those from the Temple who were making of it a den of thieves. The evangelists saw in that action the fulfillment of prophecy. "The zeal of Thy house hath eaten Me up." Now the time had come when God's great temple of creation, the whole round world, wherein stood a fallen race, was to be cleansed of all its defilement. No longer would lash of cords suffice. A stronger power must now drive the thieves from the house of prayer. The zealous Heart dies for the jealous hearts that murder It.

Infinite justice from the crushed and bruised Heart of Christ drew the fragrant savor of full sacrifice. Would our old college professor let us call the zeal of Christ the quintessence of concentrated generosity?



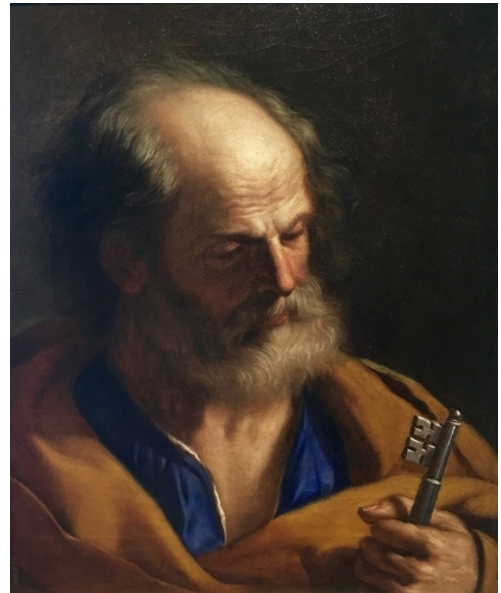
# The Heart of Peter

Thou knowest that I love Thee.

## Human Enthusiasm

### *The Age of Automatism*

The age calls for quick results. One man and a machine for a number of years past have been doing the work of a hundred men and have made a great saving of time. Now we want to get rid of that one man and have the machine run itself.



“Make it automatic,” is the cry of the day, is the demand of all and the dream of the inventor. Have fewer agents; shorten the time, and the quicker will be the results. I may write articles with a self-filling fountain pen, put them on a self-lifting elevator by which they are carried to an automatic type-setting machine. Then they are put on a self-oiling, self-inking, self-feeding, self-folding, self-binding printing-press. We need not pursue the history further. It is only one chapter in our automatic age. Those who believe the universe runs itself, do not find it hard to believe that a small portion of it may be made to do so. Some have eliminated God, who is the only self-sufficient being in existence, and for them the elimination of man is not a matter of much trouble. If they believe in perpetual motion on a large scale, why consider it madness on a small scale?

### *Enthusiasm – Automatic Energy*

Quick results are as much desired in men as in machines. If we want physical energy right under our thumb, ready to

respond to the touch at the right time and in the right place, without the intervention of a thousand agents, much more do we want moral energy equally ready, squally responsive. Because moral energy of that excellent type is not always available, men have made the saying, "If you want a thing done, do it yourself," It would be ideal to convert all of us into self-sufficient automatons, able to conduct a modern department store or a modern elective university all by ourselves. The ideal unhappily cannot be realized. We need others; we depend upon one another. How then shall we get quick results? Prompt, responsive, automatic energy gives such results in machines. Enthusiasm will do the same in men, because enthusiasm may be very easily defined as prompt, responsive automatic energy of the soul.

### *Saint Peter - an Enthusiast*

The topic of quick results now under discussion leads us naturally to the great Apostle Saint Peter, whose heart we set out to study. Christ, our Lord, was looking for enthusiasm. He was not to establish an automatic Church; He did not propose to eliminate a pilot from the vessel which He was launching for a voyage over the centuries of time. Peter had the enthusiastic heart, and His Master, who looked for quick results as eagerly as we do, chose Peter to be the chief agent in His Church. Peter's life, as we see it in the New Testament, is a splendid example of enthusiasm both in overcoming obstacles and in attaining results.

### *His Enthusiasm Self-Starting*

Enthusiasm must conquer inertia, that quality by which we keep on going when started, and keep on stopping when stopped. The first difficulty for the enthusiastic heart is to start from motion to rest or from rest to motion. Saint Peter may not irreverently be styled a self-starter. When the

seraph touched the lips of Isaias with a burning coal, his heart was fired with enthusiasm, and he cried: "Lo, here am I, send me." Saint Peter had been touched into flame by more than a seraph and a glowing coal, and he promptly responded to a word, a look, a thought of his Master. No one is first to speak and act oftener than he. He was first among the Apostles by his authority, but he was first too in other ways. Nothing could chill the ardor of his enthusiasm. Using a figure of speech, we say that those, Who discourage others, throw cold water. Saint Peter was not afraid of cold water. When he saw Christ, he was out of the boat at once to walk or wade, as the case might be. It happened, unfortunately, that he faltered and sank, because his faith was not then of the same ardor as his enthusiasm. Force or fear could not check Peter's enthusiasm. His hand flew to his sword and he wielded it before the mob in the Garden and singled out the servant of the high-priest, who was no doubt a leader of them. Death offered no terrors to daunt Peter's enthusiasm. "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death." There is no question of his sincerity and enthusiasm when he said that. It is true he failed in the supreme test, and as on the waters before a gust of wind or a white-capped wave his faith proved weak, so before an accusing crowd and a scornful laugh, his resolution broke and broke disastrously; but this shows a lack of other virtues, not a lack of enthusiasm.

### *His Enthusiasm Irrepressible*

No, Peter had no lack of enthusiasm. His voice was ever ready to burst into a shout; his muscles were ever poised for a leap; his foot was ever lifted for a run; his hand tingled and ached for instant action; even his tears had the promptness of enthusiasm and gushed forth at a look. He was not like the character of the dramatist, who cried: "Anon, anon"; he cried with Isaias: "Lo, here am I, send me." He might make

mistakes, but he believed, no doubt, with the one who said: "The man, who makes no mistakes, never makes anything." He might have to be pulled out of the water, he would not be found crouching timidly in the hold of the ship. He might have to be rebuked by his Master with the severe words, "Get thee behind Me, Satan," but it will be noticed that he deserved the rebuke for being too far front. Peter's first fault was that he was too enthusiastic. He was always at boiling-point or went off too quickly, because it was touch and go with him. His heart was overcharged with energy, and was released into instant flame or force. He was responsive, prompt, automatic. He had the heart of an enthusiast.

## **Divine Enthusiasm**

### *Eager to Shed Its Heart-Blood*

The Heart of Christ was attached to the heart of Peter because in it He saw the qualities needed for His Church. A leader wants enthusiasm in his followers. People who move when they are pushed, who cannot go of their own accord, are not desired where a cause is to be forwarded. Saint Peter had initiative and energy and so was singled out by Christ to be the Head of His Church. There was too another reason for Christ's choice. His Heart found in Peter's heart an answering trait. The Heart of Christ was filled with the purest and highest enthusiasm. To be prompt and responsive, to run where others walk, to fly where others run, these are characteristic marks of enthusiasm. To do all that in the face of difficulties and hardships and sufferings is supreme enthusiasm. To leap for others into humiliation and disgrace, to rush to a torturing death that others may live, that is divine enthusiasm. If the tears of Peter sprang swiftly into his sad eyes, every drop of Christ's Heart-blood had a swifter speed, a more exultant enthusiasm. The drops came to His Heart only that they might rush forth again. When Christ

out-stripped His Apostles on the way to Jerusalem and excited their wonder, it was the warmth of His Heart-blood gave speed to His steps. The same eager blood, swelling in His veins and pressing insistently upon the chambers of His Heart, made Him cry out that He was straitened until His baptism with that blood should be accomplished. When Christ lay in His agony in the Garden, the countless drops leaped forth as though they would in their enthusiasm anticipate their sacrifice of the morrow. Nor was His Heart's enthusiasm content when the morrow came, to give of Its streams through many deep and brimming channels; It presented itself also to the spear-point, that the full source might lavish upon us the wealth of Its contents and be drained to the last drop.

### *Schooling the Enthusiasm of Peter*

The Heart of Christ was filled with divine enthusiasm, as we know from Its sacrifices and death; but we could have known the same truth from the wonderful manner in which Christ guided and developed the enthusiasm of Peter. He who educated the impulsive heart of Peter, knew well the nature and ways of enthusiasm. He did not crush out or destroy the restless energy, which at first rushed into so many excesses. He taught Peter how to govern and direct his ardor and left him at the end with even increased energy, but all under control and centered upon worthy objects. The process is well worth studying somewhat in detail.

### *Encouraging an Ardent Follower*

At the outset Christ awakened Peter's enthusiasm by opening up to him a career like the one he followed. "I will make you a fisher of men," said Christ, and Peter enthusiastically answered: "I leave all for You." When Peter made the generous profession of faith, speaking for all the

Apostles, as he usually did: "Thou art the Son of the living God," Christ encouraged him to greater displays of enthusiasm by promptly replying, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church." Excesses of enthusiasm were checked by warnings and rebukes. If in his enthusiasm Peter erred, he was equally enthusiastic in his reparations. He promptly and entirely refuses to allow Christ to wash his feet: "Thou shalt never wash my feet," and when corrected, he is just as prompt and entire in his acceptance: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and head."

### *Reproving a Repentant Enthusiast*

The reproofs of Christ grew milder as Peter's training proceeded. "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou savor not the things of God." Christ said to him sternly when Peter remonstrated with Him about His Passion and death. But for what seems to us a far greater sin in Peter, his denial of the Lord, made more fearful by oaths and curses and lies, Christ has the gentle but sufficient rebuke of one reproachful look. That is enough for Peter. Finally, the last great encounter of these two enthusiastic hearts was the complete atonement for that denial and Christ's most gracious lesson to His ardent disciple. It was the gentlest of Christ's rebukes. The fall of Peter and his triple denial were not mentioned in word, not noticed now in look, but gently and kindly alluded to in a marvelous device of the best of teachers. Near the Lake of Galilee they met. Peter was still as enthusiastic as ever. He is still the originator. "I go a-fishing." He is still ready to plunge into the water. "When he heard it was the Lord, he girded his coat about him and cast himself into the sea." Then in the early morning light after the long night's fruitless work, after the miraculous haul of great fishes, when the meal that Jesus had made ready was partaken of, these two enthusiastic hearts close in a mighty duel of love. Three times they encounter one another and their

interchange of blows leaves them not weaker, as in duels to death, but stronger and more ardent because this was the duel to life and eternal life. Peter had set aside the pride of enthusiasm; he had not lessened its intensity. He would not put himself above others, but he would appeal to Christ's Heart for the testimony of the warmth of his love. When Christ asked: "Love thou Me more than these?" Peter with his old confidence cried: "Yea, Lord, thou know that I love Thee."

### *The Schooling Perfected*

Now at last Peter was confirmed in the faith; he was the rock solidly established upon the love of Christ. He was now prepared with chastened and purified enthusiasm to be the pastor of all Christ's flock. He was prepared, too, to look forward bravely and generously to the end which enthusiasm called for. The Heart of Christ had faced the sacrifice of death upon the cross, and the same sacrifice is foretold for the enthusiastic heart of Peter, schooled to perfection by the Heart of the Master.

# The Right Heart

Thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

## Rebel Creatures

### *Almighty Nature*

A great astronomer once said that his favorite study might, in some cases, lead persons to omit God from creation. They saw and understood so clearly the great power and marvelous effects of God's creatures that they might be deceived into thinking that they could do without the Creator. Time to astronomers is so long it looks like eternity; and the force of gravity is so far-reaching it looks like omnipotence; and light is so swift, so impalpable, it might pass for spirituality. The greatness of His creatures threatens to eclipse the splendor of the Creator. Creatures can do so much, they appear to be able to do all.

### *Almighty Science*

The wonderful forces of the soul combine with the wonderful forces of nature to fill proud man with the same false principles. The mind of man ranges through the universe, opening the door of every mystery. From the smallest particle of matter to the longest stretches of time, from ions to eons, from ants to giants, from planets to plants, nothing is so dark as not to be lit up by the brilliant mind; nothing so difficult as not to be solved by a theory. Laplace is said to have told Napoleon the First that God was not needed in his scheme of world-making. Others, too, have grown dizzy on the lofty pinnacles their minds had scaled, and have set themselves above the heavens and the Creator of the heavens. They refuse to admit mysteries because that would



be to admit that their intellects were not on the highest round of the ladder of knowledge. Mind can do so much; men are prone to think it can do all.

### *Almighty Dollar*

As scientists are tempted to deify matter or mind, so rulers deify their powers; but the lowest class of idolaters are those who deify money. The “almighty dollar” has passed into a proverb. Wealth seems to be able to do anything. It makes the commerce of the world bring it food and clothing, and the art of the world build and adorn its homes, and science amuse it with its latest wonders, and medicine of every land hurry on chartered steamers and chartered trains to cure its slightest complaints. No wonder it believes that such things as Churches and Commandments are not for it. Churches and Commandments exact obedience; wealth issues, but does not receive, commands. Its telephone has a mouthpiece, but not a receiver. No wonder that Socialism should make a god of money, although it hides the object of its adoration under a great many high-sounding names.

### *The Attack upon the Right*

Knowledge, power and wealth are the great rebels. In old fairy stories giants piled mountains one upon another in order to scale the heavens, and capture the thrones of the gods. The giants of old failed and were buried, so the pagans believed, under the mountains they were to climb upon. Knowledge, power and wealth have been more successful. They have dislodged God from his place in the soul, have usurped His throne, and demanded for their tyranny the tribute of adoration. Any one of them is powerful in its absolute sway; all three of them seem to have found a place in the heart of Simon Magus. He had more knowledge than his dupes; he had power, but wanted more; he believed with

others that everybody had his price, but probably was the first to think the “almighty dollar” could buy Almighty God. No wonder Simon Peter cried out, in indignation at such principles: “Keep thy money to thyself, to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Do penance, therefore, for thy wickedness, and pray to God that perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee. For I see thou art in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity.”

### *The Victory of the Right*

“Thy heart is not right in the sight of God,” said Simon Peter to Simon Magus. The heart of the first heretic was indeed crooked; his mind was not straight; his will was not straight. Such is the meaning of the Apostle’s words. Simon Magus had become a Christian for two motives. He was a magician and wanted the powers that the Apostles had. That was not right and straight thinking. The powers of God are to be used for God. God is at the end of the straight road that leads from His gifts to Himself, To turn God’s gifts to the honor of self is to give a turn to that road, to make it crooked, to make it swerve aside to self. To strive to put a price on God’s gifts is not right and straight thinking. To put any of God’s creatures, whether it be power, or knowledge, or wealth, above God in our hearts, is to make them crooked. God is the head of the universe, and to put anything else there is to turn the universe upside down; but to have the universe standing on its head is not according to the rules of the world’s architecture, which demands that the roof should not be dethroned to give way to the cellar. There is one thing for the proud heart to do – for the proud heart is not right in the sight of God – and that is, what Simon Peter told Simon Magus to do: “Do penance for thy wickedness and

pray to God that perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.”

## **Subject Creatures**

### *Christ's Call and Wealth*

Where had Saint Peter learned the principles of the right heart? Where had he learned the value of money? In the school of the Apostles, from the right Heart of Christ. The Apostles had been called from a life of gain to be fishers of men. Saint Matthew was bid to give up a lucrative position. The instructions on the point of money were clear and precise for the Apostles: “Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money in your purses.” These are almost the same words uttered by Saint Peter before he cured the lame man “at the gate of the Temple which is called the Beautiful.” “Silver and gold I have none,” cried the Apostle, “but what I have I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk.” Saint Peter was not as successful in making right the heart of Simon Magus, as he was in making right the limbs of the man born lame.

### *Christ's Teaching and Wealth*

Saint Peter learned the principles of Christ's Heart from the teaching and practice of the whole life of his Master. Christ, he would remember, set little store by wealth. Love for Him was more than lucre. The widow's mite went for millions in the markets of Heaven. The lost groat, which was the much-loved keepsake of a woman, became the symbol of a soul. The small coin was precious for its memories, for the love its owner lavished upon it, and so served to picture the love of Christ's Heart for the lost souls of men. It was Peter who hastened to cry out: “Behold, we have left all things and have followed Thee.” The occasion was, perhaps, the most

striking and the most memorable one in Christ's teaching about riches. The hurried approach of the rich young man, his eagerness to follow the good Master, the unconcealed love of Jesus for him, the test of the young man's sincerity, his sad and slow departure, "because he had great possessions," the terrible words of Jesus about the camel and the eye of the needle and the difficulty of the rich entering Heaven, all these were elements in a scene and parts of a lesson which Saint Peter could never forget, and which at the time drew from him the profession of having left all things, a profession that was as rich in generous love as it was insignificant in contents. The Apostle's great possessions were boats and nets.

### *Christ's Practice and Wealth*

The many acts and words of Christ would come back to Saint Peter, when he had before him the heart of Simon Magus, who seemed to think, with a heart not right, that the things of God could be bought for money. Saint Peter would have hated such principles from the day Christ lashed the money-dealers from the Temple, and asserted the unending war between God and Mammon. Saint Peter would have hated the heart made crooked by money with a still deeper hatred when he recalled, as he could not fail to do, that the only traitor of their number had been keeper of the purse and had bartered away the Son of God for thirty pieces of silver.

### *Christ's Punishments and Wealth*

No wonder Saint Peter knew the crooked heart of Simon Magus. He knew all the warping, distorting ways of money, all the blinding force of its dazzling glitter. The hearts of Ananias and Sapphira lay bare before his piercing gaze, and those that would cheat the Holy Ghost and lie to Him are stricken down before the chief of the Apostles and carried

out dead. When, therefore, Saint Peter had turned his thoughts upon the Heart of Christ, he knew how right that Heart was in the sight of God. Christ was the Way, and His whole being, and every thought, and word, and deed of Him was right, because it was to make our hearts right. The ruler which directs the pencil along the paper must have a straight edge. Saint Peter and his fellow Apostles were always squaring their principles with the true ones of Christ. They traced the path of their conduct along the unswerving line of His life and His lessons.

### *Christ's Heart, the Perfect Subject*

Saint Peter saw finally that the Heart of Christ had to be of all hearts the most right in the sight of God, because It was the Heart of God, because It belonged to the Second Person of the Trinity. Between human hearts and God the way is often long and offers many a chance to deflect to the right or left. Between Christ's Heart and God the way is as short as it could possibly be. The created will of Christ is not the uncreated will of the Second Person, but aside from identity of being, there is complete unity between them. The two wills belong to the same Person, wish the same end, embrace the same means; they are one as far as two things can be one without being identical. How right, then, is that Heart in which there is no swerving from God! A line may be crooked; a point cannot be, and Christ's Heart and God's will are nearly merged into the indivisible unity of a point. They are so close that the Heart of Christ must always be right in the sight of God. As well try to quench the sun's illimitable fires with one drop of water, as to try to abate, by any created good of mind or body, the ardor of divine love, flaming in the Heart of Christ.

# **The Good Heart**

They who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word of God, keep it.

## **The Meaning of Goodness**

### *Goodness as Men Know It*

If you were told that you had a good heart, you would likely try to recall some act of kindness you had done for the one who so praised you. A good heart, you would remember, is said to be the possession of those who do charitable acts or say kind things or entertain cheerful views of life. Where you see one refusing to believe evil of another, there, you say, is a good heart; where you hear one unselfishly defending a stranger, urged by no motives of local pride or family ties, there you know is a good heart. A good heart, too, like a good nature, dispels clouds and dispenses sunshine. It sees no evil or can excuse the evil. It can lighten or even overlay the darkness of sin and sorrow with the brightness of its own teeming goodness.

### *Goodness as God's Word Has It*

If, however, the doctor said you had a good heart, you would begin to think of another meaning of good. The doctor makes that statement because he finds no disease, no irregularity, no defect in the heart, but rather every part of it performing its functions perfectly, doing its full duty, coming up to the required standard of excellence. That the doctor may say you have a good heart, I sincerely hope, but that the heavenly Physician of souls, the infallible Searcher of hearts, will make the same judgment about your good will, that is, your heart in a far higher than mere physical sense, I

am quite confident. At all events when the Scripture speaks of the good heart, it has in view the doctor's meaning of good, rather than the more common meaning of the English word. Whatever is good in Scripture has distinctive excellence in its class and is often set in sharp contrast with what is evil in the same class. The good fish are kept and the bad thrown away. The good seed, which brings forth the harvest of wheat, is over-sown with cockle, the bad seed, the products of which are burnt. The good measure discards all shortcomings and is pressed down and shaken together and running over. The good salt has kept its savor and will not be cast forth to be trampled underfoot. The good tree is known by its good fruits, and the good ground is that fertile spot which produces a hundred-fold.

### *Goodness Produces Fruit*

You can now readily understand what is meant by the good heart; it is none other than the good ground of the parable, the productive place which gives back plentiful fruit to the good seed. "But that on the good ground are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word of God, keep it and bring forth fruit in patience." You understand also why I am confident that you have a good heart. You have welcomed the word of God, have kept it, and in patience, after long waiting perhaps, and after "much toil, but finally, you have borne fruit. The yield, I should say, was a hundredfold, although you would not likely in your humility agree with me.

### *Goodness Makes Sacrifices*

Your heart, then, I know to be good because it responds to the first test of goodness, it is productive of good fruits. Apply to it a second test, and you will see your heart is good because it fulfills that requirement also. You noticed just now

that the good heart came from separation and sacrifice. The good haul of fish, the good harvest, the good salt, all these came to as the result of discarding the evil. Recall what had to be rejected that the ground might be good for the sower and his seed. The ground had to be fenced off from the trampling feet and caged off from the birds of the air and dug up in order to be wrested from the dead weight of stone or from the tangle of choking thorns. Then only, after all that preparation, was it fit for the good seed which fell upon it. The good heart is only won at the price of sacrifice, sacrifice of way-side hardness, of faithless shallowness, of the rank growth of dissipation. Ah, how many a pathway must be closed and how often thieving wanderers must be frightened away, although the footsteps may be very sweet and the song and plumage very attractive! How again and again the hand is raw and weary, tossing aside the rough stones or rooting up the weeds! You alone know, good heart, what you have had to pay to make ready and preserve the goodness wherein the Sower sows His seeds of fruitfulness.

### *Goodness Is Tested in the Heart*

Have you ever seen a young lad climbing up or down a chestnut tree? Did you mark him holding fast to the trunk, while he pulled stoutly with his hand at some branch near him or pressed his foot heavily upon it? You know why he acted that way. His life was the next moment to be trusted to that branch, and the test would show whether the branch was good enough to be trusted. Goodness is known by the test. This is Saint Paul's teaching: "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." It is God's way also to prove and test and make for Himself good hearts. No doubt, you know that well. In the heart sacrifice reaches its completion; in the heart sacrifice is felt the most. The edge of the sacrificing knife makes there its sharpest incision. You know that, good heart, because God has tested you by sacrifice and has



made you and kept you good. His knife is ever dripping with heart-blood, and the incense of the sacrifices in the heart does not cease from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. The good heart is known by its sacrifices and is made by sacrifice, and because I know you have been proved, I know God holds fast to your heart, which is exceeding good in His sight.

## **The Comfort of Goodness**

### *Love and Sacrifice United by God*

Do not be frightened, good heart, at the prospect of unending sacrifice. Such is the law of God, applied in its uttermost fullness to the best of all hearts. If love and sacrifice go together in your heart, it is because God meant them to go together. Away in the depths of eternity when God would show His love for us, He accompanied that love with the sacrifice of what was dearest to Him. God loved the world; God gave His Only-begotten Son. Infinite love and infinite sacrifice! The Incarnation was begun so, and so too was it consummated. "He loved me and delivered Himself up for me." "Christ loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it." When your heart began to love God, you knew that, somewhere, some day, there would be a steep hill and a sacrifice. With Abraham you were destined to hear: "Take thy son whom thou lovest and go into the land of vision and there thou shalt offer him for a holocaust upon one of the mountains which I shall show thee." Ah, you have heard and you have acted, as Abraham did, and you have put forth your hand and taken the sword. Nor did the angel of the Lord stay the sacrifice; you have made a perfect holocaust of all your children.

### *Love and Sacrifice In the Heart*

Such is the privilege, such is the glory, of good hearts. Like the organ of the body which distributes the blood, the good heart never hesitates; it never stops. It is forever gathering up and discarding what is evil; forever giving forth unstintedly its precious contents, refreshing the currents of the soul by the sacrifice of the base elements, rewarming them by close, intimate contact with living love. The heart of the body never tires in purifying and giving; the good heart of the soul never wearies in its duty of loving and sacrificing.

### *Lore and Sacrifice Blessed by Christ*

You are sustained, good heart, and strengthened and comforted by Him who came to sacrifice Himself. God asked for more perfect oblations than He had received and so Saint Paul speaks of Christ in the words of the Psalmist: "Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to me. Then said I, behold I come to do Thy will, O God." When God fitted a Body to Christ, His Son, the Heart was fashioned most carefully. It was to be the source and generous fountain of Blood for the perfect holocaust which was destined to satisfy God. Pressing the meaning of the words, we may say that they express what was really the truth. Christ's physical Heart was fitted to His spiritual Heart. Both were good in the fullest sense. If it was Christ's will to shed His Blood, His Blood would not be slow in shedding itself. You have made the same offering as Christ and your good heart is comforted. You are following Him and you shall have the peace which those enjoy who bear His yoke.

### *Love and Sacrifice Fulfilled by Christ*

More than that! You could not possibly lay the keen edge of the knife so often to your heart unless His help was always there. His supreme sacrifice for which He was given to the world, for which He had a Body fitted to Him, has won for

you the courage and strength to enact your little Calvaries. Christ called Himself the Good Shepherd because He was ready, as the hireling was not, to lay down His life for His sheep. The Good Shepherd has the good heart. He lived up to His own test of goodness; He fulfilled His own principle that love and sacrifice go together. "He loved me and He delivered Himself for me." "Greater love than this no man hath than he lay down his life for his friend." Your good heart is, like its model, the good Heart of Christ, at one moment in the dark shadows of Gethsemani, resisting unto blood until it forms its resolution to make its sacrifice; at another moment mounting its Calvary to consummate its sacrifice.

### *Love and Sacrifice Constantly Practised*

When you kneel before the altar your eyes behold the Cross. The altar of sacrifice is always surmounted by the Cross. Ah, you know that well, because many a time in the darkness there you have struggled with your soul before the hour of oblation. If it were all over and done with at once, if the sacrifice were called for only once, then it would not be so hard. But, as Calvary is renewed daily on the altar, so it is with you, good heart. What you thought slain and dead, lives again. The ties you considered broken, are re-knit; the flames that were quenched, blaze forth more brightly. Along the ways of the heart may be heard the tramp of feet which you imagined had been excluded forever. Flights of wild, tumultuous thoughts, with showers of ravishing melodies, throng in upon you swiftly and insistent. You fondly dreamt that the eye and ear had been sealed effectually against these winged intruders who bear away God's sown word. Good seed, good ground, good harvests are had at the price of ceaseless vigilance and constant effort. The good heart must ever rest in the shadow of the Cross.

### *Love and Sacrifice Constantly Consoled*

Look up, dear heart, and see that Christ has made of His Heart an altar of sacrifice. There looms the Cross and its shadow never passes away from His Heart. There is the altar-stone which love has made. The Cross reminds you that His Heart is the place of sacrifice; the encircling crown of thorns is witness that the keenness of sacrifice is always felt; the wound in His Heart tells you of the fullness and the completeness of the sacrifice. Even when His executioners found Him dead, even when His Heart had ceased to beat, not yet had He ceased to have the good Heart. They made sure of the entirety of the sacrifice by slaying the slain and by laying open His dead Heart. All that is for you, good heart. His constant, entire, heart-piercing sacrifice is the incentive and the solace which you have Had to make and keep yourself good. Your heart is good because His Heart is infinitely good.

# The Kind Heart

Our heart is enlarged.

## Kindness Portrayed

### *Counterfeits of Kindness*

It be punctiliously exact in observing forms, to show exquisite deference to another, to shake hands even, with much ceremony, just before your hand fingers a trigger or closes on a sword-hilt or clenches into a fist, to do all this without deviating in the least from the prescribed code of duelling, is etiquette. To greet another warmly, consult his every need and desire, show him without weariness all you have, carry on a correspondence in which there is not an offensive expression, but every manifestation of good-will – in a word, to act on the principle in your place of business that it never pays, especially where there is competition, to make an enemy – all that is good policy. To observe engagements promptly, to say the right word and perform the proper action at the right time and in the proper way, expressing your sympathy for others' sorrows, your congratulations for their good fortune, taking your place in the round of social duties with all courtesy, all that constitutes politeness.

### *The True Coin of Kindness*

These are the counterfeits of kindness. They do in act what kindness does; they talk as kindness talks, but they do not think as kindness thinks. Worldly politeness may often so think; business policy may sometimes so think, but it is clear that the code of honor never does and never can have the thoughts of kindness. Kindness is the expansion of the

charitable heart. Its words, its works, its thoughts are the outgrowth of love, not rooted in human respect, or greed for gain, or murderous desire of revenge. The kind heart expands to good as the flower opens to the sun to shed its fragrance on the air. Kindness is the honey and perfume of the full bloom of charity. Saint Paul, with his usual plain and vigorous language, brings us into the very root and life of kindness. "Our mouth is open to you, O ye Corinthians; our heart is enlarged." These words mark the end of one of Saint Paul's triumphant catalogues of his sufferings, "as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, ... in stripes, in prisons, . . . in long-suffering, in sweetness." There was no boasting or self-seeking in all this, the Apostle would have the Corinthians believe, but rather the outpouring of his charity, which still, with parted lips, panted like the hart for the living waters, which still ached with love's swelling heart to do even more. "Our mouth is open to you, O ye Corinthians; and our heart is enlarged."

### *The Oil of Kindness*

The great difficulty for all the machinery in the world is friction. Friction slackens speed, uses up energy and wears out the machine. If surface could glide over surface and part revolve around part without the grinding of rough faces, the records for speed already reached by us would rapidly be surpassed, and even our fast age would gasp at its accelerated motion. Lubricants are a prime necessity in machines, and kindness is equally necessary to keep our moral world going. Remove the lubricants and the machinery of the world would stop; remove kindness, and school and church and home would develop so much heated friction that they would cease to operate, friendship would disappear from the world and the couples still left undivorced would hasten to break the unkind bonds which galled the wearers. The oil of kindness keeps human society

in its large as well as its small groups from breaking up into fragments.

### *The Unselfishness of Kindness*

Kindness is essentially unselfish. It is not kindness to stand before a mirror and smile in genial approbation of the one reflected there, to pat oneself enthusiastically on the back and whisper soothing words to oneself. Such actions might possibly be manifestations of confidence or hope, but more likely they are the outcroppings of pride. No, kindness is for others and beams on them approvingly and encourages them warmly. Nor is it always kindness to encourage people to be just like ourselves. Some are lavish with encouragement when others try to be like them or are following out their plans; but if others are trying to do better in their own way they often look in vain for the approving smile and cheering word. To forward the production of duplicates of ourselves is not the most disinterested kindness nor the highest type of encouragement; it is more frequently disguised vanity and selfishness.

### *The Imperialism of Kindness*

Saint Paul has made "the enlarged heart" characteristic of kindness, and the description is correct. The heart must over-leap the boundaries of self, if it would be kind. Kindness puts light in the eyes where selfishness had put dark looks; kindness smoothes the selfish frown on the forehead and relaxes the sneering curl on the lip, wreathing the features with a gracious smile. Kindness is the foe of selfish coldness and gruffness and indifference; it is the music in the voice, the gentleness in the touch, the warmth in the grasp, the cheeriness of the glad welcome, the hushed accents of condolence. Kindness is the civilizer and enlightener and sweetener of selfishness; the deadly opponent of the beast

within us and of all its manifestations. The kind heart must conquer its own stubborn and selfish possessor before it goes abroad and everywhere on its errands of charity. "The enlarged heart" is an ardent believer in expansion and imperialism, but one need not fear its growth. Its conquests are meant to add new territories to the kingdom of kindness, at home first and abroad afterwards.

### *The Daylight of Kindness*

The enlarged heart has made its first and shortest advance when it has converted the whole man into an apt medium of kindness, when it has made Dives look up from his plate and look out of his window and see Lazarus at his gate. The kind heart finds a Lazarus at every gate through which it goes out to the world. Kind acts, kind words, kind looks, kind thoughts, have crumbs of comfort for many a starving Lazarus, as the enlarged heart radiates its warmth in wider and wider circles. The kind heart rivals the sunlight. Out of the glowing furnace of its own enkindled elements leaps the ray of light. In an instant it has darted across leagues of space and touches an eastern cloud with red; in another instant it has glazed a stream with silver and has left the banks green, while it speeds across the fields, whitening the daisies, reddening the roses, coloring a hundred unfolding flowers with a thousand varied tints. Then it flashes through the open window, creeps between reluctant eyelids and wakes a sleeping world to life and work. Such is the mission of kindness, the sunshine of charity, the smile of all the virtues, the radiating goodness of the enlarged heart.

### **Kindness Personified**

#### *Going about Doing Good*



On the day that the Church became Catholic in practice by throwing open its gates to the Gentiles, Saint Peter gave an instruction to Cornelius, the Roman centurion, and to his family. In the instruction he related, as the Apostles were accustomed to do, the story of our Lord's life in brief, His baptism, His death, His resurrection. How does the chief of the Apostles summarize the public life of our Lord?

Principally in the words, "He went about doing good."

Nothing could be briefer, nothing could be more complete. This is the condensed gospel of Saint Peter, the life of Christ in five words, the biography of personified kindness. Saint Peter may have thought of the many acts of goodness done by Jesus for those not of the Jews, and so have wished to encourage Cornelius and to have further justification, if it were needed, for opening the Church to the Gentiles. But more likely he wished to put the life of his Master, as he knew it, into a striking phrase. At all events, he has succeeded in giving us a full description of kindness when he told Cornelius of Jesus, "who went about doing good." Saint Paul, too, summed up the Incarnation in a similar way when he wrote of the time "the goodness and kindness of God, the Saviour," appeared.

### *Distributing Currents of Love*

Kindness, then, would seem to be a very prominent trait in the Incarnation, and surely it is. The Incarnation was the first appearance of the enlarged Heart of Christ, the first stage – and a vast one it was – of His ceaseless travels in going around doing good. The Incarnation is the greatest of God's acts of kindness. It is the outpouring of infinite love, and so it is the greatest volume of kindness that ever came from the brimming source of charity. When charity is pent up and confined, when the pressure of its currents is held in check, it may be patient, but it is not yet kind. Like the waters of a great lake which filled up the immense bed hollowed out for

it when the world was making, so we may imagine God's ocean of love rose and surged against its barriers until finally it made a way for itself and rushed out and poured down a portion of its great power upon mankind far below. The waters of the reservoir are kind, not when sleeping in the shadows, but when running along the mill-race, sparkling in the sunlight and setting the mills of the world in motion or when directed through a thousand channels to the parched lips of men. God was infinitely kind when He emptied Himself, came down to us, and went about doing good, bringing the love of God to the helpless, thirsting hearts of mankind through the channels of a human Heart.

### *Drawing All Hearts Captive*

To mention all the acts of kindness prompted by the Heart of Christ would be to expand Saint Peter's brief biography into that of the four Evangelists. Perhaps we may better appreciate the kindness of the Heart of Christ, if we fix our attention upon one or two features where it is especially evident. The kind heart repels no one; it is attractive; it is eminently approachable. The stare, the frown, the sneer, the cutting sarcasm, the brusque indifference, the thousand and one signs of no admittance with which unkindness decks her gloomy portals, are never found along the approaches to the kind heart. Was our Lord approachable? Was the way open to His Heart? Look at the blind and halt and deaf and infirm; look at the sorrowful and bereaved; look at the timid, shrinking children; above all, look at the sinners, at Nicodemus, who came by night, and the Samaritan woman, who found Him at mid-day, at Peter and at Magdalene; look at the countless hearts of countless men and women who are forever journeying to the Heart of Christ, and then say whether the way to the kindest of hearts is wide open. Think, too, of the winning forms under which our Lord liked to picture Himself for us. He is the way, the open door and

the fold, the vine and the bread and the water of life, the anxious mother-hen, the good shepherd and the merciful father, the teacher whose burden is light and whose yoke is sweet, and who will refresh all that labor and are heavily burdened. As if all these attractive guises were not enough, He took a Mother and began His life among men by becoming the Babe of Bethlehem, in the manger, beneath the swaddling clothes, and continues His life among men in the Bread of the Tabernacle, beneath the enclosing bands of our commonest food. Nothing could be more winning, more fascinating than the kind Heart of Christ.

### *Delicate in Sympathy*

We expect kindness to be easy of access, to be magnetic. Yet that is not enough. Kindness must not always wait; it must go about doing good, and if it would arouse our fullest enthusiasm it must do good in some new way. The favor need not be great to be called by us kind, and even though great, it will not deserve the name of truest kindness if it is done to order or from mere custom. Kindness can never be machine-like. It is ever new and original and ingenious in its devices, because it is so thoughtful, so delicate in its sympathy. If a machine is out of order, send its number to the maker and he will duplicate any part. The human heart has not become standardized in its kindness. There is something individual and peculiar in every sorrow and pain; and sensitive kindness, feeling that, is ever new in its manifestation.

### *Unique in Varied Manifestations*

We shall not be disappointed if we look for these refinements of kindness in our Lord's life and shall not be wrong in attributing them to the exquisite sensitiveness of His kind Heart. Many of His great miracles are marked by a

thoughtful kindness. At Cana He anticipates the embarrassment of the newly married couple, changing water into wine. At Nairn the Evangelist notes His kindness in hastening to console the widowed mother and in seeing that the resurrection from the dead is crowned by an act of delicate courtesy. He gives the son to the mother. Similar kindness marks the raising of Lazarus from the dead. At other times His miracles are characterized by almost fairy kindness, as when Peter pays the tax from the coin found in the fish he caught, or when the tired and hungry multitudes are fed with multiplied loaves and fishes. The individuality of our Lord's kindness is displayed too in the vocations and conversions of the Gospels. The terms of address are also chosen with care, "My daughter," "My son," "My brother," "My little children," "Mary," and other expressions, are replete with touching kindness. The invitations seem to have been thought out with care. "Come and see," "you shall be fishers of men," and the like, and the winning of the Samaritan woman at the well, the singling out of Zachaeus in the branches of a tree, an ingenious situation which merited an ingenious response – all these give further examples of a really kind nature. Most of all, however, is the wonderful tact of kindness shown in opposing the malicious cunning of His foes. Those who try to entrap Him are baffled by His patience and wisdom. It is enough to recall the coin of tribute, the good Samaritan, the answer to the High-priest, and, indeed, every incident of the Passion, but the best example, perhaps, of this unique kindness is to be found in the story of the woman taken in sin, with all its marvelous delicacy in word and act. The Heart of Christ has done kinder deeds than that, but there is no other one that draws from us so quickly the enthusiastic cry: "There in truth is a divinely kind Heart!"

# **The Pure Heart**

## **The War of Man's Passions**

### *The Amphitheatres of the World*

It is hard to tell what is the greatest delight of a small boy in a small town when a circus comes. Most would mention the acrobatic feats; many the curiosities; few if any would speak of what is not intended for a performance. Yet the feeding of the animals in the menagerie has a fascination which attracts the young, even while it repels. Perhaps it is not pleasure. Certainly it is nothing like the feeding which makes his eyes dance when flashing colors and whirling forms pass before him in endless succession. All that charms; the feeding of the animals has a fascination of horror which leaves upon him an indelible impression. He sees the huge blocks of raw meat thrown through black bars of iron to restless, pacing beasts. The bright-colored covers of these dens on wheels served only to make the fierce appetites of the animals within more horrible. A beautiful picture of some tropical glade would be slipped aside and behind rows of rigid iron the munching and growling and panting lions and tigers would tear their bluish chunks of flesh with teeth shining whiter out of the dripping blood.

### *Their Deceptive Show*

Poor little fascinated and frightened boy! You thought that a horrible spectacle because you saw these animals as they really were, stripped of the colors and trappings of the show and seen for a moment in their true state. You were not able then to remove the gay coloring of the great show beside you. There was too much brilliancy; there were too many distractions of eye and ear, with blaring horns and glittering

hues, to let your inexperience strip all this away and see the prison bars and know that other animals were being fed on ruddier, nobler flesh. Neither could you be expected to know that you had before you in that gilded den of the menagerie a picture of life, a picture of history!

### *The Amphitheatres of the Soul*

The concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life, they are the ravenous monsters of the world. Behind the splendor, beneath the rouge and tinsel of life lurk the passions of men. The Roman circus fed its animals with living beings and a debased mob watched the unnatural gorging with a savage exultation. In the larger amphitheatre of all time and upon choicer victims feed the fiercer animals, anger and gluttony and lust and greed. Their prey is not dead and decaying flesh; they grasp with talons and claws; they rend with beak and jaw even daintier morsels still. The food for the passions of men comes not from the slaughterhouse, but from the home. The concupiscence of the eyes, the concupiscence of the flesh, the pride of life greedily devour the souls of men.

### *The Bright Apparel of the Passions*

The only way in which these enemies of man can effect their purpose is by concealment. To know them as they are and in their deadly effects is to hate them. Sin must come disguised, if it is to come at all. It must promise like the rose in the bud, not disappoint or disgust, as yesterday's lush and decaying roses do. So the passions of men must come laden with promises. Their claws are wreathed in flowers, and their fetid breath is overcome with the languor of perfume. Art comes with all its charms to vest them. Sculpture gives them a fair stature and exquisitely molded form. Painting bathes them in light and touches them to

grandeur with the tints of the rainbow. Music fashions melodious laughter for their lips and turns their speech into song. Dancing imparts to them the grace of movement, the varying suppleness of lithe limbs and the glow and lustre of life. The theatre and opera gather under one roof all the glory of all the arts, and with this united fascination and the glamour of suggestiveness and the Whetted curiosity of an acted story apparel them in their utmost gorgeousness. There is the amphitheatre of sin. Silken, purple awnings hide the conflict, but the victims are there nevertheless. The concupiscence of the eyes and the concupiscence of the flesh and the pride of life are rampant beneath this veil of art and glutting their ravenous jaws with souls of men behind all the pomp and pageantry.

### *The Attack upon the Heart*

Every shock of those passions is felt in the heart. The eye responds to the color and shapes, the ear to the sounds, the taste to the savor, the nostrils to the scent, the touch to the warmth and softness. Each sense thrills with its own agitation; the heart quivers with them all. All the passions are registered in the heart. There they have pressed their teeth and thrust home their fangs and buried beak and claw. The heart of man is scarred with a thousand conflicts. Every movement of its red tide bears in upon it perhaps a new enemy. They come not with purpose to destroy; they come as if to console. They are sweet and musical and fragrant and variegated and soothing and gentle. Ah, but that is only the parade of the bright conveyances. Wait awhile and the gaudy doors will slip aside and display the bar and the beasts; wait awhile, and the heart will be once more tossed to the wolves and tigers!

### *The Heart - the Last Citadel*

The end of the conflict is in the heart. The sin is not in the eye or ear or taste or touch; it is in the will. The sin is not in the body, but in the soul. The wildest agitations of the passions have at times shaken man's tormented nerves and fibres until they were almost frenzied with the clamor for satisfaction, and not yet was sin and never shall be sin as long as the will stays true. It will be sin to expose sensitive nature to the seductiveness of passion; to cast ourselves into a whirlpool and expect with untried muscles to escape to the shore; to keep in front of a speeding train and strive to push it back; that would be suicide, and to do the like in moral things is suicide of the soul. Unhappily, passions do not wait until the heart comes to them; they often come to the heart of their own accord; but, however near they come, however baleful their glazed eyes, and however close their hot, sickening breath and dripping jaws, they cannot reach the heart. The black iron bars are there to keep them back. The will must do as the keeper does before the small boy's fascinated gaze and must toss the heart to the beasts. What is the heart, then, which does not pass behind those black iron bars? It is the pure heart; the heart whose unclouded vision shall see God; the heart whose tongue shall fashion the new canticle, whose lips are stained with the wine which springs forth virgins, whose feet follow wherever the Lamb goes. It is the pure heart, too, from which Saint Paul says charity, the perfection of the Gospel, comes. "Now the end of the commandment is charity from a pure heart and a good conscience and an unfeigned faith."

## **The Peace or Christ's Purity**

### *The Birth of His Purity*

It is eminently fitting that Saint John should picture the Lamb of God upon Mount Sion surrounded by those who were "without spot before the throne of God." The leader of



that throng which had “His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads,” the centre towards which the new canticle was sung, sung “as the noise of many waters and as the voice of great thunder and as the voice of harpers, harping on their harps,” the brightest star in that galaxy of purity, is and deserves to be the pure Heart of Christ. What care was taken by God that no blemish should come near that source and model of purity! A sinless virgin whose soul never for an instant passed under the shadow of sin, whose heart-blood never was kindled by the fever that is the curse of fallen man, she, the spotless one, was prepared by God to be the Mother of the Lord. Nothing was lacking in Heaven or upon earth when the time came for the first heart-beat of Christ. Through the coming of the Holy Spirit, under the overshadowing power of the Most High, the Second Person passed to earth. Infinite purity united Itself within immaculate virginity to the spotless nature created by the infinitely pure Spirit of Love. So the pure Heart of Christ began to beat among the stained children of the race of Adam and for their cleansing.

### *Brightness and Warmth of His Purity*

The pure Heart of Christ! Pure indeed and flawless as crystal, but not hard; blanched indeed like the newly fallen, shining snow, but not cold; purged of all blemish and refined as a white hot flame, yet not consuming; such is the pure Heart of Christ, having all the beauty of every spotless thing in the universe with none of the defects that go with Its symbols. With all this divine purity there is associated no cold reserve, but only excessive attractiveness. Human hearts become stern; they harden a little in the face of a world which threatens their innocence by every avenue entering into man’s soul. Human hearts are wax in the blistering, pitiless heat of overpowering passions. They must ever be on their guard, they must be ever checking themselves and holding

others in check, and so through prudence and chaste fear they surround themselves with a circumspection, somewhat cold but wisely careful. Not so with the pure Heart of Christ! With the lavish intimacy of the sunlight His love went everywhere and was as pure and unsullied when it made hearts like those of His Mother Mary and Saint John more resplendent, as when It fell upon the soiled hearts of sinners who had been trodden down into the mire. Christ touched them all with cleansing lustre and was untouched Himself. His Heart was as approachable and intimate as sunlight and yet infinitely more pure.

### *Kindness of His Purity*

The world did not understand the Heart of Christ then, and it does not understand It now. Even His Apostles wondered at the approachableness of their Master. There is nothing to surprise us in this. The world looked on Christ as a man and does so now. So His purity is something far above man's thoughts or imaginings; something beyond their own experience; something divine. Indeed the attitude of Christ towards the Samaritan woman and towards Magdalene is so unlike anything of His own time or before, and so strange to us even yet, that the very strangeness and newness of His conduct are enough almost of themselves to prove that Christ was God.

### *Sympathy of His Parity*

Join to that intimate friendship the full knowledge of Christ, and the wonder increases. Some hearts are pure because they know not, because they see no evil in themselves and cannot imagine it in others. Christ knew all and saw all. Before His consciousness were the sins of man, not only those that have passed into history, but also every most secret thought or desire in all their shamelessness. Christ

had knowledge of all. It is evident in Magdalene's case when to the Pharisee's "She is a sinner," He made answer, "She is forgiven." It is evident in the case of the Samaritan woman whose whole life lay open to Him. It is most of all evident in that scene which of itself is a proof of the divinity of Christ, the scene of the hypocritical accusers convicted and skulking away and of the forgiven sinner left alone and dismissed sinless. "Hath no man condemned thee?" And she said: "No man, Lord." And Jesus, who knew her heart and came with His pure Heart to cleanse the hearts of mankind, said: "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more." All these and many others, of whom the Gospels do not speak, came close to Christ, became His intimate friends and had their hearts made pure by His Heart. Only the Heart of God has acted and can act in that way.

### *Mercy of His Purity*

Courage, then, hearts of mankind! Peace has come again after passion, and where ruin was and desolation, now once more is consoling prosperity. You have had to contend with the passions in their fascination and in their ferocity. Your hearts have been scene of battles, of some victories, perhaps of many defeats. You may now, it is likely, look back upon them to a time when all was peace therein, with greensward and ripening grain and flowers and a quiet homestead. You recall how the war came. With attractions at first to pique the curiosity and with color and music; an advance guard, a swiftly riding troop, a skirmish line, then buglers and the march of many feet. You shudder at the memory of what followed, when the storm burst and war was seen as it is: shouts and thunder and curses and blows, grass reddened with blood, flowers trampled into the mud, boundary lines blotted out, and the old home of your youth and innocence a blackened mass of smoking ruins. And then when the fight went by and left you in dark isolation, you

thought that all was lost. But you forgot a more terrible defeat, where another Heart contended with passion; you forgot the more glorious victory, where defeat was changed to triumph; you forgot the pure Heart of Christ, which knows all and will welcome you and will let you come near to Him, nearer than before. The scene of defeat will become better than it was and will have fairer flowers and richer harvests and dearer homes than before. Love which has ruined the world saved it on Calvary. The love of the pure Heart of Christ put stouter and stronger bars between the hearts of mankind and their enemies, the wolf and the tiger.

# The Heart of Paul

## Paul's Practice of Earnestness

### *Earnestness - No Half Measures*

"Let me do that," is the cry we hear from the lips of the earnest and strenuous. They cannot bear remissness or delay; they will not tolerate indifference. They will hurriedly take the work from another, should he be the least uninterested. Their energy piles up behind an obstacle, as a torrent behind some barrier which for a moment checks its onward rush. They press here and there, strain fretfully at their temporary prison, and finally with a burst of speed over-leap all hindrances and sweep on triumphantly. No half measures for them! When they are rulers, they are Napoleons; when discoverers, they have the restless ambitions of Columbus; when they would be orators, they will bury themselves in caverns, out-shout the ocean and exile themselves from their fellow-men, like Demosthenes, until they have reached perfection; when they would be saints, no toil is too arduous, no sacrifice too great, no undertaking too vast or dangerous. The bleak desert or the filthy slums, the monotonous grind of the classroom, the patience, and watching and endurance of the hospital, the slow death among the leprous, these and



thousands of such difficulties are the merest trifles to those who are in earnest.

### *Earnestness of Paul Unconverted*

Saint Paul was a man of no half-hearted measures. He himself says: "Beyond measure I persecuted the Church and wasted it." He held the garments for those who stoned Stephen, that they might have freer arms to do the work more thoroughly. He went to Damascus, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." No call like that which summoned the other Apostles would do for him. The sweet invitation, the gentle entreaty, would scarcely halt such a fiery zealot in his mission of destruction. To make Saul, Paul, a sudden light must flash from Heaven, the persecutor must be stricken down by a stronger force than his own. Then, trembling and blinded, he will humbly ask to see and be taught and become a Christian and an Apostle.

### *Earnestness of Paul Converted*

Saint Paul's conversion did not change his heart; it simply changed the direction of his heart's rushing currents. His heart now enlarged its scope without diminishing its intense force. It became a vessel of election, an instrument in the hand of God for greater good. Like the sun in Ecclesiasticus which is called "an admirable vessel, the work of the most High." three times more hot than a furnace, he "burns the mountains, breathing out fiery vapors and shining with his beams." The fire of hatred was changed in Paul's heart to the fire of charity, and Palestine became too small for him. "He increased much more in strength" and was to carry the name of the Lord "before the Gentiles and Kings and children of Israel." The light of God's truth that had been hidden in one nation, was destined to rise above the horizon

of Palestine and dawn upon the whole world. The heart of Paul cried: "Let me do that," and went forth over lands and seas, bringing to mankind the charity of Christ.

### *Earnestness of Paul's Lore*

No one, we might say, has tortured language, as Saint Paul has done, to make it a fit expression for the earnestness of his heart, and nowhere is he more magnificent, more sublime, more universal than when speaking of charity. His words quiver like the metal walls of a trumpet when it vibrates with a mighty volume of sound. On this subject the "trumpet gives no uncertain sound." Who will limit the extent of Saint Paul's charity? "Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Who will fathom the source of his charity which flows from his full knowledge of God? "O the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments and how unsearchable His ways!" "I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified." His charity has all tenderness: "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears that you might know the charity I have more abundantly toward you." His charity awakens a tender response: "I bear you witness, O Galatians, that if it could be done, you would have plucked out your own eyes and would have given them to me." He was father and mother and nurse to his little children whom he had begotten again in Christ. He would in the excess of his charity become accursed, an anathema, for them. A faith which would remove mountains, the distribution of all his goods to the poor, the burning of his body in martyrdom, are less than charity and are nothing without charity. In the exultation of his great love, Saint Paul triumphantly defies creation with all its mighty forces to tear his heart from the Heart of Christ. "Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or

persecution? or the sword?" With indignant scorn he repudiates the possibility. The heart that consented to the death of Stephen, now made one with Christ in the bonds of charity, is sure "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

## **Paul's Principles of Earnestness**

### *Christ Crucified – the Ideal*

Saint Paul did not use the words, devotion to the Sacred Heart, but he practised what the words describe, and he was restless with the fiery zeal which inflamed him to make all possess the charity of Christ. His teaching was as earnest as his practice. He is relentless, untiring in preaching the love of Christ crucified. Crucifixion and death is the only thing to satisfy him. As a zealot, he put people to death; as a Christian, he would have his followers meet death. He advocates martyrdom, preaches martyrdom, calls for martyrdom, and enacts martyrdom. Not Christ and Christ born or teaching or working miracles or sowing the seed of God; not Christ glorified, but Christ crucified is the lesson that the fiery heart of Paul is always imparting. Nothing short of a complete absorption in Christ's love will do.

### *Be United with Christ*

Saint Paul calls us the letters of Christ, which He has written and sealed. A letter is a substitute for the absent friend; it is the flying spark which enkindles a far off fire; it is a throb of the heart of friendship. Christ wrote us, put into us the secrets of His love and addressed us to Heaven. The address is written in blood-red. In many other ways also is our loving



union with Christ described by Saint Paul. We must be His good odor, the perfume of Christ exhaling His virtues. We must be His temples, echoing with hymns of praise, murmuring prayer and fragrant with the incense of propitiation and sacrifice. We must come still closer than temples to the one worshipped. We are to be co-heirs with Christ and, as members of the Church which is His spouse, we are brought into a still more tender relation. We are younger brothers to Him who is our Elder Brother.

### *Live Christ's Life*

This is not yet enough. We are still too far away. We must by Saint Paul's teaching live Christ's life. We are born in Him, live in Him, mount His Cross, go down into His tomb, rise with Him from the grave, follow Him in triumph when He leads captivity captive in His Ascension and reign with Christ, our King, in all ages to come. "As therefore you have received Jesus Christ, walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him."

### *Be Christ's Members*

Nor as yet is the heart of Paul satisfied. Relationship with Christ, companionship with Christ will not suffice. He bids us come still closer, to be Christ. You are the members of Christ through which the Blood of His Heart flows. You bear upon your bodies the wounds of Christ, and as you were nailed with Him to the Cross, His hand cleaves to your hand, His Heart reddened the same spear point which now passes into your heart, and you "fill up those things that are wanting in the sufferings of Christ. For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God."

### *Reproduce Christ's Soul*

“Whom God foreknew, He also predestined to be made conformable to the image of His Son.” “Let us, therefore, bear also the image of the heavenly Adam,” hearkening to the zeal of this Apostle who tells us: “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind and put on the new man.” So then our whole being is to be conquered to Christ and His charity. That conquest, if complete, means to cross continents and brave stormy seas, bringing the different nations of one soul beneath the yoke of Christ. We are to have no thoughts but those of Christ because “we have the mind of Christ.” We are to have no other wishes except His, because we must be “filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” We are to have no other beginning, no other end but Him, living we live for Him, dying we die for Him, wishing “to be dissolved and to be with Christ.”

### *Christ Liveth In Me*

If these sublime lessons were ever realized to their full extent, then it was in the soul of the great Saint Paul, in whom the ambition of conquerors and the enthusiasm of artists and the venturesomeness of explorers and the ardor of martyrs and all the best devotion which can be found in the hearts of men, were united and centered in their utmost intensity upon Christ. When Paul hated, nothing could exceed the fury of his hatred. “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” the voice of Christ cried from Heaven in expostulation. When Paul loved, nothing could surpass the tenderness and passion of his love. There was nothing half-hearted about the great Saint Paul. His own personality had been completely annihilated. The transformation of love was made perfect. The Heart of Christ was in full possession of the heart of Paul. “I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me.”

## About This EBook

The text of this ebook is taken from the books *The Heart of the Gospel*, published in 1911, and *The Heart of Revelation*, published in 1917, both by Father Francis Patrick Donnelly, SJ.

Each book has the Imprimatur of Cardinal John Murphy Farley, Archbishop of New York, New York.

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